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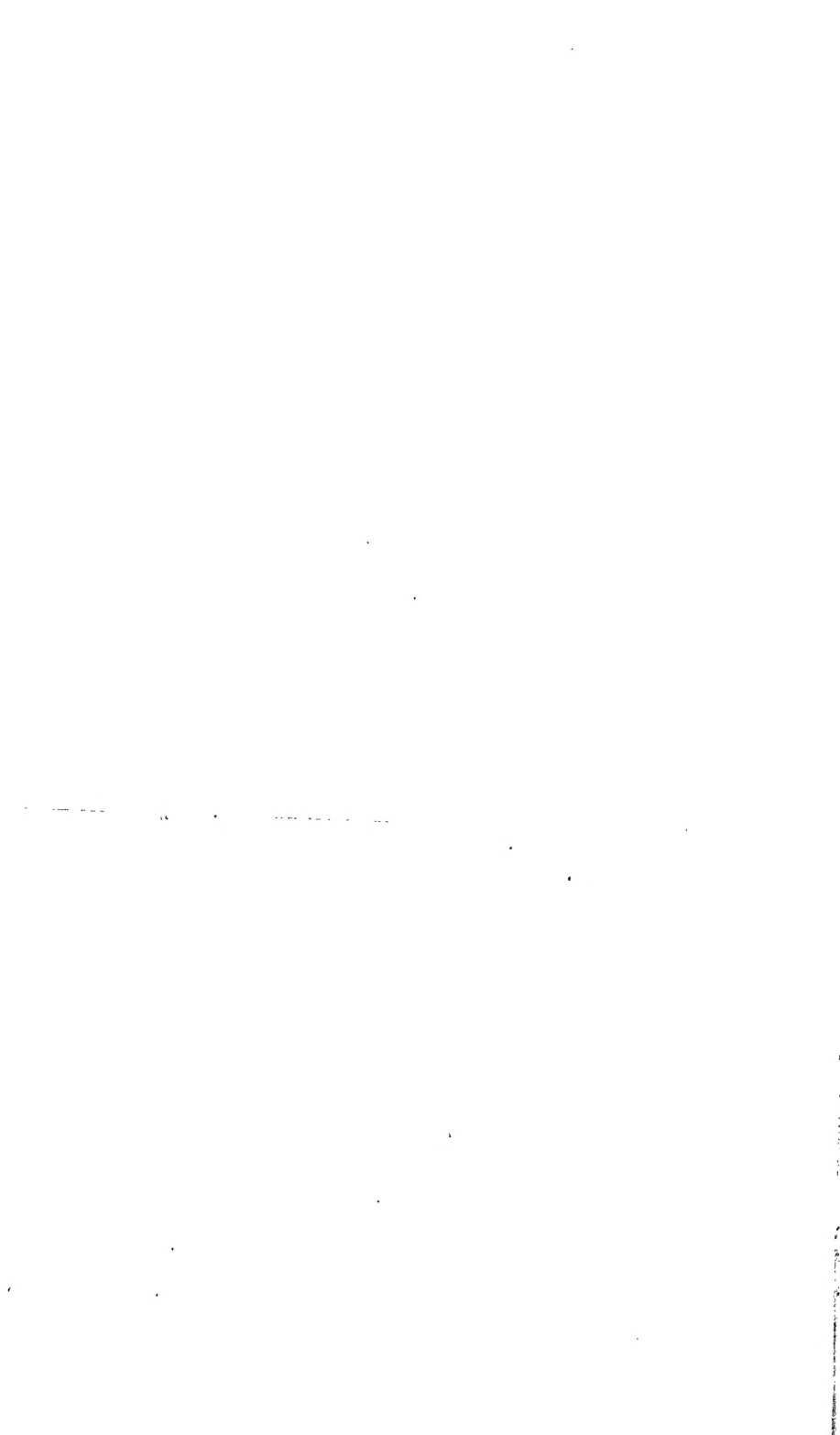
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MAP OF SOUTH AFRICA.

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# PRIMITIVE POTTERY

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
SOUTH AFRICAN CERAMICS,  
PREHISTORIC AND PROTOHISTORIC.



By

J. F. SCHOFIELD

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## P R E F A C E

Mr. J. F. Schofield, who was invited to write this, the third Handbook published by our Society, needs no introduction to students of South African ceramics, especially the sherds associated with Mapungubwe and Zimbabwe. He is an authority to be looked to for expert opinion in a difficult subject which needs an eye trained in assessing shape, texture, colour and technique. To those who study this book it is confidently recommended as authoritative. The intricacy can be debited against the subject, the clarity can be credited to the author. This is a first systematic approach to the whole problem in Southern Africa, the fruit of deep personal study, and the seed for future research and clarification.

The value of manual training in the education of African students is being increasingly recognised. This handbook performs a service in making available representative examples of the art of our indigenous potters, thus providing a nexus between a primitive craft undertaken in the home from directly available materials on the one hand, and further developments in the plastic arts on the other. This work should provide an authoritative source of information for teachers of handicrafts.

It might be objected that part of this volume smacks of ethnology rather than of archaeology. Yet it must be remembered that to-day's ethnology is to-morrow's archaeology. As proof of this we may quote from Britain's earliest conscious antiquary, John Aubrey, F.R.S. Writing some two hundred and eighty years ago, he put the matter very clearly:

"As with the light after Sun-sett—at which time clear; by and by comes the crepusculum; then total darkness—in like manner is it with questions of Antiquitie. Men thinke, because everybody remembers a memorable incident shortly after it is done, 'twill never be forgotten, which for want of registering at last is drowned in Oblivion; which reflection haz been a hint that by my meanes many Antiquities have been reskued and preserved (I myself now inclining to be Ancient), or else utterly lost and forgotten.

"The retring of these forgotten things from Oblivion in some sort resembles the Art of a Conjuror, who makes those walke and appeare that have layen in their graves many hundreds of yeares; and to represent as it were to the eie, the places, Customs and Fashions that were of old Time."

*Brief Lives.*

Not least among the virtues of this present Handbook is the care with which Mr. Schofield links proto-historic pottery types with existing tribes and peoples. Here we have a Handbook written for to-day, yet of increasing value to South African Archaeology so long as pottery persists and potsherds are found. This Handbook sets a new standard in our series, and should provide a source-book for much future work on our ceramics, undivorced from its cultural associations. This is a field in which the amateur can become expert; provided he collects wisely and carefully, labels clearly and associates correctly. Within any one area there is a range of pottery that merits careful study and documentation. No documentation could provide more lucid models than the illustrations prepared by Mr. Schofield, and by Mr. G. W. Hockey of Cape Town.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

In completing this work, I must give my unstinted thanks to Mr. A. J. H. Goodwin, not only for the initiative that originated the Handbook, but for his unfailing assistance and advice during the months of its preparation.

My thanks are also due to Mr. G. W. Hockey for his valuable assistance with the drawings, and to many other friends for the help they have so generously given. Amongst these I must mention more particularly, Mr. E. C. Chubb, Mrs. E. Goodall, Mr. Pringle, Mr. K. R. Robinson, Miss M. Shaw, Mr. R. Summers, Dr. E. C. N. van Hoepen, Dr. N. van Warmelo, Dr. L. H. Wells.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

AM.	The Albany Museum, Grahamstown.
CU.	The School of African Studies, The University, Cape Town.
DM.	Durban Museum.
ELM.	East London Museum.
MM.	The collection at Mariannhill Monastery, Pinetown, Natal.
MMK.	The MacGregor Museum, Kimberley.
NGM.	The Natal Government Museum, Pietermaritzburg.
NMB.	The National Museum, Bloemfontein.
NMByo.	The National Museum, Bulawayo.
PEM.	The Port Elizabeth Museum and Snake Park.
PU.	The collection in the charge of the Archaeological Committee of the University of Pretoria, in the Old Museum, Pretoria.
QVMM.	The Queen Victoria Memorial Museum, Salisbury.
RLM.	The Rhodes Livingstone Museum, Livingstone.
WUMS.	The collection at the Witwatersrand University Medical School.

*"We have this treasure in  
earthen vessels".*

S. PAUL.

PART ONE.  
MAN AND POTTERY.

PROLOGUE.

For in the Market-place one Dusk of Day,  
I watched the Potter thumping his wet Clay:  
And with its all obliterated Tongue  
It murmured—"Gently, Brother, gently pray."  
—Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

The ability to recognise a stone implement at a glance is for most of us a matter of specialised experience and education, but everyone knows a piece of pottery when he sees it. If it is only to discard it as "A bit of Kaffir pot", he has by his recognition acknowledged the fundamental fact of his cultural relationship to the maker of the sherd.

The circumstances surrounding the production and evolution of stone implements have been revealed to us during the last eighty years by the painstaking labours of our prehistorians. They are so utterly remote from our daily lives that we can easily understand the attitude of our forefathers, to whom any unmistakable flake they chanced to find was a "fairy's stone"—made by the little people who haunted the woods and pastures on moonlit nights, whose ways are not our ways, and whose thoughts are not our thoughts. But pottery, even in its humblest forms, is part and parcel of our daily lives.

This familiarity with the broken sherd has in the past led to its neglect, for it is only comparatively recently that it has been recognised as the key to the secrets of that chapter of the human story which precedes recorded history, and is termed the Protohistorical Field, where potsherds are to the archaeologist what stone implements are to the prehistorian. Being practically indestructible and available in vast quantities, they have preserved for us in the rubbish heaps of vanished peoples in almost every part of the world, details of their rise, wanderings and decline which would otherwise have been lost to us.

The break between the Old Stone Age and the New was accompanied by a vast release of human energy and inventiveness, all having flowed from the progressive replacement of hunting by animal husbandry and of food gathering by agriculture. These have remained the main pillars of our food supply and consequently of civilisation ever since. The Neolithic Revolution, as we call this epoch of change in human affairs, was named, oddly enough, from one of its less important facets—the practice of finishing stone implements by surface grinding, was accompanied by the discovery of weaving, house-building, pottery and, more revolutionary still, that of metals.

Pottery is now of such universal distribution that it is impossible to give any but the vaguest replies to the questions of when, where and how it was first made. All such knowledge has been lost in the mists of antiquity, but this much we can say: whenever and wherever it has been invented (and it is likely that it has been invented many times), it has in all probability originated amongst a people who were practising some form of agriculture. We make this statement because people whose main livelihood is derived from hunting must follow the game in its migrations. They seldom stay long enough in one place for the complicated business of making, drying and burning of pottery, nor have they any specialised acquaintance with the soil and its ways. So we find, by and large, that such peoples make use of vessels of wood, ostrich eggshell, horn and hide. Since they prefer their food broiled rather than boiled, such pots as they employ are likely to be bartered from more settled folk, and for much the same reasons we find that people who have to follow their herds from one pasture to another tend to use vessels made of materials not likely to be broken on their migrations. With the agriculturalists, on the other hand, the case is altogether different. Mother Earth is indeed their parent, and if they are to succeed in winning her favours, a knowledge of the soil must become part of their traditional lore, and the remarkable function of plasticity possessed by some soils (particularly such as have been affected by decaying vegetation near streams



and pools) is certain to be noticed. Thus we can see that only amongst a settled agricultural folk do the main factors of their life tend to encourage the emergence of pottery making.

*The Rise of Agriculture.*

The records of Prehistory have shown us something of how man—once he had broken the thralldom of instinctive reaction to stimuli binding him to the evolutionary wheel—began to modify his environment, instead of being modified by it—as is the case with the rest of animated creation. He had progressed with increasing acceleration towards an ever increasing emancipation from the control of his outward circumstances. Then the miracle happened; for man himself took a hand in the evolutionary process and began to use it for the modification of his fellow creatures—the plants, and, to a lesser extent, the animals wherewith he was associated. This he did to such purpose that the identification of the parent stocks of our familiar foodstuffs is still a matter of uncertainty amongst the botanists.

It is indeed an astonishing circumstance that the work of these proto-agriculturalists of the early Neolithic Period has in its main outline remained until the present day, for the carbonised or desiccated grains of primitive wheats and barleys found in the middens of Swiss Lake Dwellings or in pre-dynastic Egyptian graves are further removed from their nearest representatives amongst the grasses than they are from our own cereals. Modern research has taken up the work of the Neolithic Revolution after a lapse of perhaps 10,000 years, and by the intensive use of selective cultivation has succeeded during our own life time in giving us new and better varieties of grains and fruits; but we may be certain that the even more radical transformations effected by our remote ancestors must have taken many generations to complete.

The study of Comparative Religion has shown us that in many instances the cultivation of food plants and the breeding of domestic animals has, in the past, been surrounded with a numen of sanctity and taboo, of which the repugnance of the Hindu towards beef and the English to horse-flesh are modern survivals. Indeed it is very probable that the only

force in a primitive community that has sufficient potency to control the persistent effort so obviously demanded by this selective cultivation is that integration of the material with the spiritual which we call religion. With us it has long since been canalised and controlled by intellectual sanctions, but amongst primitive people (even as we know them to-day) it is still largely untrammelled by such restraints. We may, therefore, suppose that in those far-off days it was not uncommon for a community to associate itself with a plant upon whose seeds or fruits they had been subsisting, and to regard its fruitfulness as coinciding with their own success as a community. It was, we believe, this faith of theirs that led them to take the first step in agriculture—that of nurturing and tending their adopted plant and thus ensuring their own well being. In this they built better than they knew, for no one then living had any fore-knowledge of the results that would flow from their tending, garnering and sowing, carried on generation after generation without any improvement they could recognise, even when it did occur.

It is very unlikely that any primitive community could survive that divided its allegiance on such an important matter, for tolerance is not one of the primitive virtues. Nor would it be possible for a knowledge of the cultivation of wheat, for example, that had been gained over many centuries by a people living in the Fertile Crescent, to be diffused to Egypt and there applied to the progenitor of the barley plant. Still less could a votary of the Maya maize goddess have any useful suggestions to offer to a worshipper of the potato god of Equador. Food plants themselves were diffused far and wide at an early date, but the knowledge of how these transmutations from the parent stocks had been effected was never diffused, for it remained unformulated until recent times.

From all this it will be seen that agriculture had no single point of origin. Vavilov, for example, has recognised seven primary agricultural centres, all confined to the tropical and sub-tropical regions, and all associable with mountains or highlands. Five of these centres are in the Old World and are associated with the Himalayas, the Hindu Kush, the mountains of Ethiopia, the highlands about the Mediterranean,

and the mountainous regions of China. The two New World centres are confined to Mexico and Central America and the tropical regions of the Andes.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the remains of a purely agricultural community have never been discovered, nor do we suggest that such a community has ever existed. Man has always been acquisitive of other people's ideas, and in the earliest Neolithic settlements with which we are acquainted, agriculture, hunting, food-gathering and herding were all practised; but always it would seem that either agriculture or herding predominated.

### *The Discovery of Pottery.*

A number of suggestions have been made to account for the invention of pottery. It has, for example, been pointed out that it is the custom of certain peoples, living on the Great Lakes of North America, to cover their wicker-work baskets with clay, and the idea has been put forward that the burning of a basket treated in some such manner may have been the basis upon which the potter's art has been founded. But no sort of a vessel could ever have been made in this way, and anyone who made the experiment would have nothing more inspiring than a crumbling heap of brick dust for his pains. Basketry moulds, destroyed at every burning, are used by several peoples in the production of their pots, notably amongst the Hausa and the Uele of the Congo Basin; but these moulds are used for the making of highly specialised types of pottery, and must be considered as secondary and not primary inventions. The truth is that, even in its simplest forms, the making of pottery is a very complicated business and could never have been discovered by an accidental concatenation of circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Vavilov, N.I.: Cited from Goodwin, A. J. H., *The Origins of Certain African Food-plants*. *S. Af. Journ. Sci.*, 1939, XXXVI, pp. 445-63.

The successful production of pottery usually demands five separate processes which may briefly be described as :

1. Preparation of the body or mass of potters' clay.
2. Shaping of the pottery.
3. Drying.
4. Firing.
5. Water-proofing.

Of these processes the first four are essential for the successful preparation of every batch of pottery, while the use of the fifth is more or less optional. This being the case no technique of pottery making could have been evolved by successive generations of potters each adding their experience to the common stock, for no people will go on making unusable pots indefinitely; but in each instance in which it has been discovered the discovery must have been made by a single mind—some unknown Plassey who, undeterred by repeated failures, continued her experiments until they were finally crowned by success.

It is not suggested that the significance of these processes was necessarily understood by the people who practised them, or that they were performed to produce the results which we ascribe to them. We know that primitive potters are wont to hedge their work with magic, for their business is beset by so many unpredictable risks that they must guard their undertakings from all perils—those of the unseen world as well as those of the world we see.



## II.

### POTTERY MAKING AMONGST PRIMITIVE PEOPLE..

#### *Its Distribution.*

Our belief that pottery making is one of the fruits of the Neolithic Revolution derives substantial support from the researches of Kroeber. It is generally accepted that the peopling of the Western Hemisphere took place across the Behring Strait, at a period subsequent to the Neolithic of the Near East. What elements of civilisation, if any, the immigrants took with them, it is difficult to say, but they appear to have speedily reverted to a natural basis of subsistence in their new home, if indeed they had ever left it.

Kroeber has shown that about the year 3,000 B.C., agriculture had a new beginning in America with a totally different set of food plants to those known in the Old World. "It is in the region of southern Mexico that a wild maize grows—teocentli, 'divine maize', the Aztecs called it. From this, in a remote archaic period, the cultivated plant was derived. . . Pottery has so nearly the same distribution as maize agriculture, as to suggest a substantially contemporaneous origin, probably at the same center."<sup>1</sup>

In South Africa, where, prior to the emergence of the Hottentot and the advent of the Bantu, both cattle herding and agriculture were unknown, pottery is shown by its stratigraphy to have been a recent import.

On the Australian Continent, where the Neolithic Revolution never obtained a foothold, pottery is unknown, except through contact with people from New Guinea at the Torres Strait.

Pottery is also unknown to the islanders of Melanesia, but we need not infer that this was always the case, for we

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<sup>1</sup> Kroeber, A. L.: *Anthropology*. Harrap. London, 1923.

know from the traditions of the more advanced Polynesians that in some instances they lost the craft when they migrated to coral islands where clay could not be found.

The introduction of better tools may enable people to make wooden vessels and discard the use of pottery, as happened amongst the Hottentots; while the ubiquitous petrol tin has now a world-wide distribution, greatly to the detriment of the older handicrafts. We must not, however, presume that because a people do not use pottery they are necessarily ignorant of it. Instances are not lacking in which its manufacture has been deliberately abandoned. The Bushongo seem to have done so at the behest of one of their kings who wished to encourage the carving of wooden vessels.<sup>1a</sup> This may be related to the taboo which prevents a Zulu man, whose proper work is cattle herding and wood carving, from carrying an earthenware pot. Also in Western Europe during the whole mediaeval period pottery making was in abeyance. Only the very crudest green and yellow glazed pottery was made. People preferred vessels of wood, metal, horn or even leather, although the art had not been lost, as is shown by the beautiful "encaustic" flooring tiles still to be seen in many ancient churches.

If we accept Vavilov's seven primary agricultural centres, then, in the light of Kroeber's demonstration of the dependence of pottery on agriculture, we might expect pottery also to have originated from a similar number of primary centres; but probably owing to the immensely complicated nature of such an enquiry, no research appears to have been conducted along these lines—at least as far as the Eastern Hemisphere is concerned. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt but that there is an intimate relationship between the type of food supply and the kind of pottery used by a primitive community, for we know that people who subsist on different food sources tend to have different kinds of pottery also. This can be seen very clearly from a comparison of typical Hottentot and Bantu pottery in South Africa.

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<sup>1a</sup> Torday, E.: *On the Trail of the Bushongo*. Seeley Service & Co. Ltd., London, 1925, p. 202.

*Its Manufacture.*

Primitive pottery making (as might be expected from its association with primitive agriculture) is carried on by women, and is always shaped by the hand; while that of more advanced peoples is made by men with the aid of the potters' wheel. There are a few apparent exceptions to both these rules. For example, on the Lower Congo a simple form of potters' wheel is used in an area where European influence has been at work for several centuries.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the Ila-speaking tribes of Northern Rhodesia beautifully decorated pipe-bowls are made by men,<sup>3</sup> who also may work as potters in Uganda and Nyasaland. In both these last instances the departure from normal practice has probably been brought about by Arab influence from the East Coast.<sup>4</sup>

The refusal of women to use the wheel in their pottery making, even when it is well known to them, may be partly due to the habitual conservatism of the sex, and also to the fact that while the wheel demands a long apprenticeship for its mastery, the wares turned out by the customary method serve equally well for all their purposes and are not greatly inferior to wheel-made pottery. Further, as Goodwin has pointed out,<sup>5</sup> people tend to become more and more expert in the use of traditional ways and techniques. The more this is the case, the harder it becomes for them to break with tradition and learn the use of new tools. If the tradition is forcibly broken, artistic ability inevitably suffers. No more striking example of an interference with tradition could be brought forward than the case of the Bushman, who, as a result of the overwhelming pressure of stronger peoples, modified their traditional way of living and abandoned their ancient art of rock painting.

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<sup>2</sup> *Notes Analytiques du Musée du Congo*. 1907. Tome 1. Fasc. 1. La Céramique. Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, E. W., and Dale, A. M.: *The Ila-speaking peoples of Northern Rhodesia*. Macmillan. London, 1920, p. 195 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> Roscoe, J.: *The Baganda*. Macmillan. London, 1911.

<sup>5</sup> Goodwin, A. J. H.: *Method in Prehistory*. Handbook Series I, 1946. *S. Af. Archaeo. Soc.* Cape Town, 1946.

We may now consider the various ways and means by which primitive people have adapted our five principal processes to the manufacture of their pottery. These processes will be described in some detail, because it is largely from a knowledge of present-day methods that we can understand those used in the past.

### 1. *Preparation of the Body.*

Plasticity in clay is due primarily to the presence of "free water" (that is, water mixed mechanically with the mass of the clay), and water chemically combined with the silicates of aluminium that form the essential ingredients of the clays used by primitive potters. The "free water" is largely eliminated during the process of drying, and the "combined water", with any "free water" that remains, is driven off by firing.

The clay most sought after by primitive people is found along the banks of streams and pools, where, owing to the presence of small quantities of tannic acid derived from decaying vegetation, a high degree of "temporary plasticity" has been attained.

As no clay in its natural state is ready for pot making, the "body", as the mass of raw clay is called, must be prepared in several ways. Stones and other foreign material must be separated from it, and it must be pounded or trampled, usually with the addition of water, in order to bring it to the proper consistency for working. Then various substances called "openers" must be added to it. These substances vary with every type of clay and also, amongst primitive people, with the beliefs and superstitions of the potters.

In actual practice the use of "openers" produces three principal effects by which they may be classified:

- (i) They reduce the shrinkage in very plastic clays during the process of drying.
- (ii) During drying they aid the escape of the moisture due to the presence of "free water", and of steam during burning.
- (iii) They may serve to hold together, during drying, vessels made with a refractory clay, thus serving as a binder as well as an "opener".



The commonest "opener" used is clean sand, which reduces the risk of the pot developing cracks while it is being dried. Pounded earthenware has a similar effect, and as it increases the porosity of the clay it also assists in the escape of steam when the pot is being fired. The only material recorded from South Africa that may have served both as a binder and as an "opener" is grass.<sup>6</sup> This, as we shall see in another chapter, has interesting associations.

Amongst peoples living under cold climatic conditions the partially prepared clay is often left to be further broken down by the action of frost during the winter months.

## 2. *The Shaping of the Pottery.*

In the absence of the wheel, primitive potters have devised a number of ways by which they shape their pottery, some of them living in North, Central and West Africa press the clay into a mould, the Hausa for example, have developed this practice to great perfection and produce a fine dense ware by beating the clay with a special mallet into stone moulds; but by far the most prevalent way, and the only one practised in South Africa, is by the manipulation of the clay, using only the simplest tools.

This manipulation is carried out by three methods:

- (i) By forming the clay into a ball or lump from which the pot is worked up.
- (ii) By rolling the clay into rings or long cylinders that are used in successive coils to form the vessel.
- (iii) By making "bats" or flattened slabs of clay with which the pot is built up.

Many attempts have been made to show that these methods have something more than a purely practical significance, the first has been ascribed to the Bushman, and it has been suggested that the second is derived from coiled basketry. While this may be the case in America, in Africa such baskets are associated with the raffia palm and the grass lands whence the material is obtained, but coiled pottery has a much wider

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<sup>6</sup> Kannemeyer, D. R.: *Stone Implements of the Bushmen, etc. Cape Illust. Mag.*, 1890, I, pp. 120-30.

range and is known from both the Hottentot and the Bantu wares.

At the present time South African potters use the first method for making small and even moderately sized vessels or for commencing larger ones, which may be completed by using either the second or the third methods, or both in conjunction, apparently at the dictate of individual predilection.

Those potters whose traditions demand pots with flat bases use a mat or skin on which to commence their work, the round based vessels are usually started from a potsherd that can be rotated as the work proceeds, but vessels with pointed bases must be commenced at the shoulder and on a flat surface; the neck, if one is required, must be made separately and joined to the body after it has dried sufficiently to bear handling.

The construction of vessels in two pieces seems to have been frequently resorted to, and probably gave rise to the carinated and the lenticular profiles we shall have occasion to mention later on.

The making of large pots seems to have presented difficulties that our potters solved in several ways. Amongst the Tswana the brewing pots are built up from the lip, the flat base is added as a separate piece after the pot wall has been completed. The Manyica commence their large pots in a basket, mould the pot up to the lip, and after the body has dried, complete the base.<sup>7</sup>

Whichever of these methods is used, the pot under construction is rotated from right to left. Fresh clay is added with the right hand, while the left hand is inside the pot supporting the work as it proceeds, both hands being continually moistened. The surfaces are scraped smooth with a small horn tool or the shell of a fresh water mollusc and the rim is formed. At this stage the pot is often worked over with a piece of wet leather as a finishing touch, and any incised or stamped decoration may be added, after which it is set aside to dry.

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<sup>7</sup> Martin, C.: Manyica Pottery. *Trans. Rhod. Sci. Ass.*, 1941, XXXVIII, pp. 52-62.

### 3. *The Drying.*

The freshly-made pots must be put in a sheltered place until the free water contained in the clay has dried out and they are leather-hard. At this stage the surface may be given a fine polish by rubbing it with a smooth pebble, and it may be coloured with different ochres or graphite. Details of the decoration may be touched up or decoration may be added.

### 4. *The Firing.*

Firing or burning has the effect of driving off the combined water in the clay and robbing it of its plasticity, after which the shape of the pot cannot be altered. To fire a pot a temperature of between 350° and 400° F. must be maintained for a considerable time, depending on the nature and thickness of the pottery being burnt. Owing to the almost invariable presence of iron in the clay its colour is changed to a yellow or brick red. If the firing takes place under reducing conditions (that is, in the absence of oxygen but with an excess of hydrogen or carbon dioxide) the pottery will be coloured a light to deep bluish grey or even a metallic black. The black-topped wares of pre-dynastic Egypt were produced by these means, as is the brindled pottery from Basutoland.

Primitive people seldom use any kind of a kiln, contenting themselves at most with a hole or depression in the ground in which the pottery is placed and burnt with dried cowdung, grass, wood, leaves and, in exceptional cases, charcoal.

After the pots have cooled they are usually taken into use without further ado, but they may be coloured with vegetable dyes, ochres or polished with graphite and even be decorated with engraved designs.

### 5. *Water-proofing.*

This type of ware has the disadvantage of not being water tight. To remedy this several expedients have been adopted, the commonest being to rub some form of varnish into the surface of the pot—the Zulu use a mixture of soot and a pulp made of the leaves of the *Sida rhombifolia*. The Hausa place the pot, while still hot from the fire, on a mass of foliage—

the dense smoke thus raised makes its way into the pores of the pot and fills them with a deposit of tar. Other folk obtain a similar result by suspending their newly-made pots over the hut fire or in thick smoke.<sup>8</sup> The Kikuyu are said to burn their pots a second time with the same object in view,<sup>8</sup> and the Pueblo Indians repeat the process three times over.

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<sup>8</sup> Routledge, W. S. and K.: *With a Prehistoric People*. Arnold. London, 1910.

## PART TWO.

### CLASSIFICATION AND DEFINITIONS.

All over the world the Protohistorical field is very limited, when compared with the vast periods of time covered by the Ages of Prehistory. This generalisation applies with greater force to South Africa than to many other lands, for with us the Prehistoric Age has continued down to our own times, while the Protohistorical field has probably had a duration of not more than a millennium. This is, of course, a matter of no little importance and interest, for it enables us to study events, analogous to those that took place in the Mediterranean basin four thousand years ago, at close range.

As we have already indicated, pottery in the Protohistorical field takes the place held by stone implements in the Pre-historical field. It is true that we have plenty of other objects presented for our consideration; but pottery from its ubiquity, its cheapness, the ease with which it can be moulded into any desired form, and the impossibility of altering that form once it has been burnt, gives it pride of place over all its rivals.

This facility with which pottery can be moulded has led to a greater differentiation between the pottery traditions of various peoples than can be found in any other department of their cultural heritages—a differentiation which can only be equalled by that distinguishing their respective languages. These divergences in pottery making are accentuated (as are indeed many cultural traits) by the process which we may term “selective emphasis”. Thus, when a community hives off from the parent body, it usually takes with it not only a common nexus of cultural traits, but also predilections in favour of certain traits of the ancestral heritage. These traits it will continue to emphasise until the emphasis has been raised to its highest possible power. It is in this way, we would suggest, that the Hottentots developed the pointed

bases of their pots; and the Herero, Ovambo and the Dama the practices of the Sacred Fire, which in the 16th century was an attribute of the Monomotapa. Thus, too, the Ovambo have emphasised the chapes of their dagger sheaths, until from being merely caps they have become practically the whole sheath. It is thus that the Herero have become parasites on their cattle, and it is thus, we may well believe, that the walls of Zimbabwe came to be built.

Pottery, and more particularly its decoration, may also furnish clues regarding the use of other objects, which, either by their rarity or perishable nature, are absent from the archaeological record. Spirally wound wire bangles, twisted wire, beads and string are frequently used to produce simple patterns, and on rare occasions beads themselves have been pressed into the clay before burning. The use of a metal blade can also be inferred from the presence of clean, sharp incisions in the decoration.

Generally speaking, the same methods must be followed in dealing with Proto- and with Prehistorical deposits. It must, however, be remembered that, while each stone implement is usually one and indivisible, for the purposes of the statistical analyses of our finds, the reverse is the fate of nearly all the pottery vessels recovered. They are, with few exceptions, shattered into scores of sherds and scattered beyond hope of recovery. Therefore the mass of our finds is likely to consist of undifferentiated pieces of burnt clay regarding which little else can be said but that they are "just pot". Nevertheless, some attempt must always be made to determine the size and shape of the original pots, the type of clay used, the nature of any ingredients added to it, to decide the constructional methods used in their manufacture, and to estimate as far as possible the number of vessels present. When we have been able to do this, and perhaps reconstruct in whole or in part some of the pots we have found, we shall probably be struck by the resemblances they present to the wares made by other peoples, very distant in both space and time. Thus, the polychrome pottery made at Dhlo-Dhlo and Khami during the 18th century might be mistaken for Halstat wares of the 9th century B.C. were its provenance not well established. The

present-day pottery made at the Rustenberg Location on the traditional lines of the Pedi has all the distinguishing features of La Tène pottery. Such resemblances are interesting rather than important. We may be sure that, in passing from continent to continent and from millennium to millennium, traditional habits and skills and the objects they produce must suffer such changes as to render them unrecognisable. The fact that these resemblances exist should therefore be regarded as the best possible proof that no other significant relationship exists between the objects concerned. But beyond all this, we must realise that the resemblances of colour, form and decoration upon which we base our study are only relevant when the objects we compare are essentially similar; that is to say, when we have good reason to suppose that the purposes of our objects, and the emotions to which they gave rise in the minds of the people who made and used them, are also comparable. This, of course, involves a willingness to regard our relics of the past, not with our own eyes, but from the standpoint of the people who originally made and used them. A real effort of the will and the imagination is thus continually being demanded of us, for without this our labour of collecting, analysing and correlating our material will be largely wasted.

The materials used by the prehistorical craftsmen in the production of stone implements imposed a very rigid discipline on the forms they could fashion: but no such limits bind the potters' hands and the endless varieties of their art embarrass us by their profusion. How then, we may ask, can we thread our way through all this maze of material? The answer is threefold:

- (i) On a given site, and at a given period of its history, only one type of clay, fired to a similar degree, will be used, to the virtual exclusion of all others. Any pottery which does not conform to the predominant type should be set aside for further examination, as it may belong to an intrusive ware; but we must not forget that much of our material will be found in middens, where it may have been subjected to a secondary burning sufficiently intense to alter its appearance completely.

- (ii) All the forms of the pottery in one tradition tend to be modifications of a very few; frequently not more than one form. Thus we shall find that a beaker-bowl will present all the features of a pot with a vertical neck, but modified by the exaggeration of the mouth opening, and that a shallow bowl will have all the same features, but modified by the reduction of the height of the pot wall.
- (iii) Decorative themes will tend to be variations of a very few motifs and will occupy relatively similar positions on all the pots. For example, in a tradition in which the junction of the neck and the body of a pot with a vertical neck is covered by a decorated band, it will be found that a spherical pot will have a similar band at a similar distance below the mouth. the methods of decoration will also tend to be similar and to be reiterated endlessly.

✓ After having sorted out all the examples of the predominant pottery type of our site, we shall usually find a number of sherds in hand which do not conform, and we must decide if they are merely unusual specimens, or whether they represent an alien pottery tradition. This is always a matter of the greatest importance, for it is through the information gained from this source that a comparative chronology for all our sites will eventually be worked out. There is, unfortunately, no golden rule by which such questions can be decided, for only by continual application can we gain that flair which will enable us to distinguish the productions of different pottery traditions at a glance. These imported wares also show us something of the contacts that existed between different peoples. Pottery being both heavy and fragile is seldom (amongst primitive peoples at least) exported for its own sake, but rather for the sake of its contents, and thus we are able to learn something of the direction, if not the nature, of their commercial enterprises.

In all probability we will also find pieces of pottery so badly and roughly made that there will be some difficulty in classifying them at all. This is particularly the case with material from cave sites. In dealing with it we must remember that pottery-making people are not habitual cave dwellers except under the severest stress of adverse circumstances, when



it is likely that traditional practices would fall into disuse. But besides all this, human skills must be acquired; that of pottery making only after long practice and many failures. We must therefore expect to find examples made by the 'prentice hand as well as those made by the expert worker.

Not only must we learn to distinguish between different pottery types and classes, but also to recognise the fact that differing potteries may all belong to the same cultural context. In this we have three guiding principles; firstly, we must always regard primitive people as being just as much human beings as ourselves, and, even at their furthest removes from us, far more like us than unlike us. Therefore, we shall generally be right in following the old adage, and so judge other people by ourselves. With this in mind, we may consider the circumstances of our own homes. Long ages may separate the evolution of the coarse red ware, of which the flowerpot is a surviving example, and a piece of Dresden china; that does not prevent them from being absolutely contemporaneous articles. So with our primitive potters; they, too, had their fine and their coarse wares, and no good purpose is served by ascribing them to rival dynasties or to distant peoples; besides, such reasoning is contrary to our second principle, which may now be stated.

Long ago during the Middle Ages there was a crusty old school-man, called William of Occam, who laid down a principle to aid men in their reasoning. He taught his pupils that when they were searching for the explanation of any phenomenon they were to seek the least number of causes, preferably but one. In memory of him this principle has been called "Occam's Razor" or the Doctrine of the Parsimony of Causes.

Thirdly, when assigning dates to our phenomena, we must always be ready to accept the latest dating consistent with known fact.

#### *Cultural Terminology.*

It has been found impossible to eliminate entirely such terms as Bushman, Hottentot and Bantu that have been allowed to acquire a racial as well as a cultural significance. These and similar words will be used to describe particular cultures only, and under no circumstances will they imply that

any given culture was practised by a people having a particular physical structure or racial connection. Confused thinking on these and similar lines may be the cause of endless ambiguities. Nothing could illustrate this more clearly than the case of the Korana, who to-day practise a quasi-European culture, but whose racial relatives in the not very distant past were responsible for the following cultures:

- (i) A widely distributed Bushman Culture of a Wilton facies.
- (ii) The culture of the San Hottentots.
- (iii) The quasi-European Culture of the surviving Korana.
- (iv) The Hottentot Culture of their immediate forebears.
- (v) A developed Wilton Culture at the Oakhurst Shelter.
- (iv) A Bantu Culture of the Shona type at Mapungubwe.
- (vii) A Bantu Culture of the Sotho type on neighbouring sites in the same area.

The whole network of traits, of which pottery is only one, that go to the formation of a cultural pattern are neither more nor less than methods man has adopted to modify his environment. Therefore, no trait, however striking it may be, should be used to describe either him or his race. For example, the ancient Egyptians have often been described as "a stone building race", but in fact nothing is further from the truth. Actually, about 2,500 B.C. a great man of genius, Imhotep, discovered ways and means of constructing great stone buildings, and these methods of his were used throughout the Dynastic Period by priests and kings to express their pride or piety. The Egyptian commonalty built with sun-dried clay as they do to this day, and will doubtless continue doing, until they discover a cheaper and better material. Here in South Africa it is often stated that the Zulu has never used stone as a building material, but the Zulu (possibly because he never reads anthropological publications) has remained in complete ignorance of this, and the hillsides round Nkandhla are strewn with stone-walled cattle pens, both ancient and modern. It is true that normally the Zulu constructs his fold with a wooden fence, but when a supply of wood is not to be had he will not scruple to surround it with a stone wall rather than risk the loss of his stock.

A CLASSIFICATION AND TERMINOLOGY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN  
PRIMITIVE POTTERY.*Classification.*

The primitive pottery of South Africa may be classified primarily under five heads:

- (i) Pottery from Late Stone Age sites;
- (ii) Bushman Pottery;
- (iii) Hottentot Pottery;
- (iv) Pottery from Iron Age sites;
- (v) Recent Pottery.

(i) *Late Stone Age Pottery*.—The pottery included under the first two of our heads does not lend itself to a particularised classification, for it is, as will be seen later, of a sporadic and haphazard occurrence. It is very doubtful if any of the Late Stone Age people ever made pottery themselves, and the sherds recovered from the sites they occupied can, in almost every instance, be attributed to their Iron Age neighbours.

(ii) *Bushman Pottery*.—It is true that the Bushman did make pottery in certain localities and on a very small scale; but pottery-making cannot be considered as part of his cultural heritage, and at best we must regard his efforts as poor imitations of the wares of his more advanced neighbours.

(iii) *Hottentot Pottery*.—Hottentot pottery has a highly developed individuality of its own, but its characteristics are so uniform, and particular examples so diverse, that classification is impracticable at present.

(iv) *Iron Age Pottery*.—The pottery from the Iron Age Sites, on the other hand, requires to be classified with much greater detail, and before this can be done, several terms in constant use must be defined.

*Class*.—When the word *Class* is applied to any particular type of pottery we indicate that it has been found on a number of sites that have been occupied by people who enjoy a similar cultural heritage, but whose tribal name is either unknown or uncertain. The classes of pottery are differentiated by symbols derived from the initial letters of the names of the territories from which the pottery was first described, and by numbers giving the chronological sequence in which the pottery

is presumed to occur. Thus the symbols  $R_1$ ,  $R_2$ ,  $R_3$  are used to designate all the ancient pottery from Southern Rhodesia that is amenable to classification.

This system of classification is open to one serious objection; for since the people whose pottery we are studying were all more or less migratory, and since it is reasonable to suppose that they took their pottery traditions with them on their migrations, it might well happen that the pottery made by one and the same people has different symbols assigned to it at different stations on their route. A case in point is that of the people who occupied the Stone Hut Settlements and whose pottery is termed Class  $ST_2$  when it is found in the Southern Transvaal, and Class  $NC_2$  when it is found in Natal. But this objection is more apparent than real, for a changed environment is a great accelerator of change in many directions, and amongst these, pottery practices are by no means the least conspicuous.

*Category.*—It frequently happens that different kinds of pottery are found on the same horizon, on the same site, or on the same site-complex. These may be conveniently classified as *Categories* and distinguished from one another by a lower-case letter in brackets. Thus the designations have a purely local significance, and when the true alignment of the pottery to which they refer has been decided their use should be discontinued.

*Industry.*—Pottery may be said to belong to the same *Industry* when similar methods and materials were used in its production, and similar motifs were used in its design and decoration.

*Group.*—This term may be used very conveniently to describe a number of related industries in the same class, that are by no means identical, but not sufficiently distinct to receive a separate designation from that of their class. Groups should be described as being of their particular class and differentiated by Roman numerals.

(v) *Recent Pottery.*—When dealing with *recent pottery*, symbols, such as are described above, are not used, but it is classified under the tribal name of the people who made it

or, when its manufacture is common to a number of related tribes, then the name of their language group is used. When making use of these names their proper prefixes are dropped and the root only is employed. Thus the word Zulu is used to denote both singular and plural, and indeed everything appertaining to the Zulu people. The only exceptions to this rule are those names that have acquired a territorial significance, such as Ovambo, Matabele, Basuto, for to use any of these without its prefix would savour of pedantry.

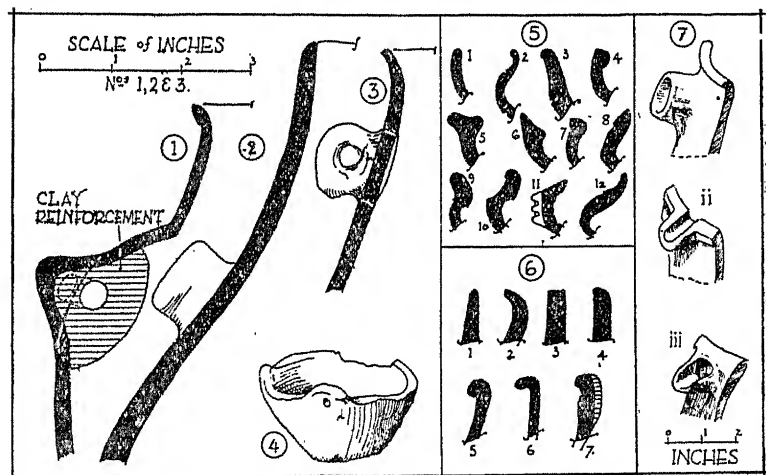


Figure i

1. Section of an internally reinforced lug. See Plate i, 14.
2. A stud lug. From Port Nolloth. SAS.
3. A ring or disc lug. From Klien Karas, S.-W. Africa. MMK.
4. A small pot with the rim pierced through vertical projections. From Craigie Burn, Somerset East. AM. After Laidler.
5. Various sections bowl rims.
6. Various sections of pot rims.
7. Types of spouts.

*Terminology.*—For the purpose of description the primitive pottery of South Africa may be divided into five main types, namely:

1. *Bowls.*—Under this term we include all vessels in which the vertical height (H) is not greater than the overall measurement across the rim (d).
2. *Pots.*—These are vessels in which (d) is less than both (H) and (D) (that is, the greatest diameter of the vessel), and in which the shape of the body approximates to the globular.

3. *Beakers*.—These are vessels with more or less vertical sides in which (H) is greater than (d).
4. *Animal-shaped Vessels*.
5. *Miscellaneous Pottery*.

## I. BOWLS.

This type may be subdivided into:

### A. Deep Bowls, including

- (1) Hemispherical Bowls, in which  $\frac{1}{2}(d)$  approximates to (H) (pl. iii, 9).
- (2) Sub-spherical Bowls, in which (H) is greater than  $\frac{1}{2}(d)$  but less than (D) (pl. ix, 9).
- (3) Spheroidal Bowls (pl. iv, 2).
- (4) Flared Bowls (pl. vii, 20).
- (5) Bowls with vertical sides or Beaker Bowls; the latter are similar in shape to the Beakers (pl. vii, 19).
- (6) Shouldered Bowls, in which (d) is less than (D), and the neck rises out of the body with a gradual line (pl. iv, 4).
- (7) Bowls with necks; the necks may be vertical, flared or conical (pl. iv, 1).
- (8) Carinated Bowls, in which the neck joins the body with a salient ridge (pl. iv, 3).
- (9) Bowls with pointed bases (pl. i, 11).

### B. Shallow Bowls, including.

- (1) Simple shallow bowls (pl. iv, 5, 6 and 9).
- (2) Cover bowls; these were used both as bowls and as covers for pots (pl. x, 4).
- (3) Platters.

## II. POTS.

Pots are classified primarily according to the shape of the body, and by the form of the neck and the base. These last we regard as adjuncts.

### A. Pot-bodies and also pots without necks may be:

- (1) Spherical (fig. ii, 1).
- (2) Spheroidal or oblate, in which the height of the pot-body is less than (D) (pl. iv, 13).
- (3) Barrel-shaped (pl. xi, 3).
- (4) Elongated, in which (H) is greater than (D).
- (5) Pointed, in which the body has an egg-shaped or a more or less pointed contour (pl. i, 3 and 5).

- (6) Biconical or lenticular, in which the upper and the lower portions are more or less convex in section, the junction between them being in the form of a medial ridge (pl. xii, 1 and 10).
- (7) Gourd-shaped; these may be either (i) simple (pl. x, 3), or (ii) inverted (pl. viii, 29).

B. Pots with necks. The necks may be either (1) short (pl. iv, 12) or (2) tall (pl. iv, 18).

- (1) Pots with short necks—those in which the height of the neck is less than its diameter—include: (i) Shouldered pots (pl. viii, 20); these differ from the shouldered bowls only in the relative size and shape of the body (pl. vii, 1). (ii) Pots with vertical (pl. v, 5), convex (pl. v, 1), flared (pl. iv, 15) or conical necks. (iii) Carinated pots, similar to carinated bowls (pl. ix, 2).
- (2) Pots with tall necks; those in which the height of the neck is greater than its diameter, and is either vertical (pl. iv, 18) or conical.

C. Pots with bases.

- (1) A simple flattening of the base of the pot (pl. xii).
- (2) A projecting base, in which a ring of clay is added round the edge of a flattened base (pl. vii, 6).
- (3) A ring base, in which the base is formed by a ring of clay; this base, being hollow in the centre, facilitates the carrying of the pot on the head.
- (4) A conical base, in which the base takes the form of a truncated cone (pl. x, 6).
- (5) A pedestal base, which resembles the foot of an egg-cup (pl. vii, 12).
- (6) A tall or goblet base (pl. xi, 13).

It is to be noted that these types of bodies, necks and bases are to be found in almost all of their possible mathematical combinations. Bases have also been noted combined with several types of bowls.

### III. BEAKERS.

Beakers are all small in size and were probably used as drinking vessels. They may be classified as follows:

- (1) Bell beakers, with flattened bases and somewhat in the shape of an inverted bell (pl. vii, 17).

- (2) Tumbler beakers, also with flattened bases and the sides more or less vertical (pl. vii, 9).
- (3) Bellied beakers, in which the dimension (d) is less than (D). They also may have flattened bases (pl. vii, 10).

*Features that are common to Bowls, Pots and Beakers.*

(a) *Rims*.—The rims of *bowls* show a greater variety of form than those of any other type of vessel. A few of these only can be noted:

1. Rounded on both sides. This is the commonest form of rim.
2. Bent inwards, rounded and everted.
3. Rounded and everted.
4. Thickened and rounded on the inside, flattened horizontally and slightly splayed on the outside.
5. Flattened horizontally with rounded projections on both sides.
6. Bevelled to the inside.
7. Bevelled to the inside and projecting externally.
8. Rounded, bevelled and finished with a small quirk externally.
9. Thickened on the inside, rounded and everted.
10. Thickened on the inside, rounded, everted and finished to the body with a distinct carination.
11. Bevelled to the outside.
12. Bent inwards, tapered, slightly everted, and bevelled (fig. i, 5).

The rims of *pots without necks* may be

1. Rounded on both sides.
2. Bevelled.
3. Rolled and undercut.

The rims of *pots with necks* may be

1. Tapered.
2. Tapered and everted.
3. Squared.
4. Rounded and squared.
5. Rolled.
6. Rolled and undercut.
7. Rolled and reinforced on the inside (fig. i, 6).



Amongst the *beakers* there is no great variety of rims. They are usually rounded on both sides, finished with a slight roll, tapered, or rounded and slightly everted.

We do not wish it to be understood from this description of rims that any specific rim can occur only with the type in which we have placed it. This is certainly not the case, and our classification must be regarded more as a generalisation than as an exact statement.

(b) *Lugs*.—Lugs may be divided into three classes, namely, those horizontally pierced and those vertically pierced and unpierced lugs.

1. Horizontally pierced lugs may be subdivided into three main types: (i) Internally reinforced (fig. i, 1); (ii) Disc or ring lugs; (iii) Pierced bosses.
2. Vertically pierced lugs take the form of pierced cylinders or bosses, attached to the vessel just below the lip, and either worked up from the pot-wall or planted on to it (pl. vii, 10). Every stage can be found in the transition between the cylindrical lug and the rim-hole. Occasionally vertically pierced lugs were reinforced (pl. i, 6).
3. Unpierced lugs or bosses may generally be regarded as decorative features, but occasionally they may serve as handles or for the attachment of carrying slings.

(c) *Rim-holes*.—Rim-holes, like the lugs, are intended for suspension, and appear to have been pierced before burning. They may be classified as being: (i) Pierced through the rim below the lip of the vessel (pl. vii, 12); (ii) Pierced through vertical projections from the lip (fig. i, 4); (iii) Pierced through horizontal projections from the lip.

(d) *Handles*.—Handles may be regarded as intended for holding a vessel rather than suspending it. Their use is by no means confined to Recent Pottery, as examples have been found on sites of undoubted antiquity. They may be classified as being either single or double, vertical or horizontal.

(e) *Spouts*.—With few exceptions, all the spouts we have examined belonged to spherical pots. They can be classified as: (i) Tubular spouts; (ii) Channel spouts; (iii) Bridged spouts (fig. i, 7).

(f) *Feet*.—Solid cylinders of pottery, apparently the feet of large three-legged pots, have been recorded from the Zeerust district. Similar feet, but on a smaller scale, have a wide but seemingly disconnected distribution in South Africa (pl. i, 8).

(g) *Lids*.—Lids may be of two kinds: (i) Socket lids. In these the flange of the lid fits over the mouth of the vessel. (ii) Spigot lids, in which the flange fits into the mouth of the vessel.

Lids with handles or with knobs have also been described (pl. ix, 13).

#### IV. ANIMAL-SHAPED VESSELS.

Animal-shaped vessels have been recorded from several localities, the most important being the ceremonial vessels of the Zezuru tribes of Southern Rhodesia and the bird-shaped pots of the Basuto (pl. ix and xii).

#### V. MISCELLANEOUS POTTERY.

Under this head we include all such articles as pottery pipe bowls, spindle whorls, figurines, spoons and any other articles made of earthenware that are not classified elsewhere (pl. vi and viii).

## PART THREE.

### HUNTERS AND HERDSMEN.

#### I.

#### POTTERY FROM LATE STONE AGE SITES.

As we have already stated, pottery is a late arrival on the South African archaeological scene, and when it is present, it is usually found only in the upper strata of the deposits in which it occurs; the question, therefore, as to whether or not it should be considered as being in association with the Late Stone Age material, into which it is sometimes intercalated, is one that must receive attention, and as our Late Stone Age sites may be classified as being either Open Sites or Cave Sites, we must follow on these lines.

##### *Pottery from Open Sites.*

The upper strata of all open sites are particularly liable to the intrusion of alien elements, and therefore the artifacts they contain must be continually checked against those obtained under more favourable circumstances.

Pottery has of course been discovered in the upper strata of numbers of sites that have also yielded relics of the Stone Ages, but its presence may be attributed either to a post-Stone Age occupation, accidental intrusions, or perhaps to similar circumstances to those affecting its occurrence in cave deposits. In any case, in every known instance, it can be demonstrated that the pottery concerned does not belong to a Stone Age nexus, but that it normally has other associations.

##### *Pottery from Cave Sites.*

The stratigraphy of the upper layers of cave deposits is more likely to preserve for us a clearer picture of the activities of the people who originated them, than can be obtained from the similar strata of open sites.

Now experience has shown that there is a marked distinction between the pottery obtained from caves and shelters where the walls are decorated with paintings, and that from

undecorated cave sites, so much so that we must consider it under different heads.

#### POTTERY FROM DECORATED CAVES AND SHELTERS.

The pottery obtained from caves and shelters where the deposits are characterised by a lithic industry of a Wilton facies, and where the walls are decorated with paintings, is usually broken into such small pieces that they may fairly be described as cominuted fragments. The rarity with which the contiguous pieces can be found makes it probable that they were brought on to the sites as sherds, and only in exceptional cases as complete vessels. This suggestion is rendered all the more likely because the old Wilton people did not use these sites as dwellings, for had they done so the smoke of their domestic fires would have rapidly ruined their paintings. It would seem therefore that, like their modern descendants the Bushmen, they habitually lived in the open, using only the slightest shelter, and probably regarded their painted caves as being in some way sacrosanct. The hoarding of scraps of pottery seems to have been a widespread habit of the Bush peoples, for it has been recorded by Laidler (<sup>1</sup>p. 776) and by Dunn (<sup>2</sup>p. 84) from sites in the Cape Province (not always from decorated caves), and as we shall see, from Southern Rhodesia as well. In contrast to these scraps, the pottery from the undecorated caves is usually in large enough pieces to permit the original size and shape of the parent vessel to be recognised, a fact that suggests we are dealing with domestic discards.

The painted caves of the Northern Series are generally in the granite, where they have been weathered by a process that is still active, for the cave earth is largely made up of particles of granite fallen from the roof and walls, while the paintings show unmistakable signs of progressive disintegration. The painting is generally divisible into two zones: a veritable dado of smudged colour occupying the lower part of the cave wall, and a painted area above it, where, despite much overpainting,

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<sup>1</sup> Laidler, P. W.: *Hottentot and Bushman Pottery of South Africa. S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1929, XXVI, pp. 758-86.

<sup>2</sup> Dunn, E. J.: *The Bushman*. C. Griffin & Co. London, 1931.

figures of men and animals are clearly delineated. It is reasonable to suppose that pictures had been painted first on the lower and most accessible part of the walls, and as they became obliterated (partly by continual overpainting, and partly, perhaps, by the rubbing of the painted bodies of the members of the tribe) it would be necessary for the artists to make use of the still undecorated wall-surfaces, even when the height above the floor required the use of some form of scaffolding.

Now a number of these caves that have been partly filled with debris (Bambata and Nswatugi for example) have been excavated to a very considerable depth, and the cave walls exposed. It might be expected that the paintings, or, at least the smudged dado, could be traced down to the levels at which (from the presence of pigments in the deposits) it has been suggested the old artists lived. But this is not the case, for in all known instances the cave walls below the original surface levels are entirely innocent of any paint.

We cannot accept the view that the Stone Age artists erected scaffolds, 10 feet (3.0 m.) or more in height, from which to paint their masterpieces, while the cave wall directly below them was entirely unused, nor would the accumulations of cave earth destroy their paintings. Rather the reverse, for the Zamenkomst slab was preserved face downwards on cave deposits, and the painted gravestones from the Outeniquas have been preserved, notwithstanding their burial in the graves. In these circumstances it would seem we have no choice other than to ascribe the paintings to the latest Stone Age occupants of the caves, and to regard them as being contemporary with the pottery, and thus with the opening phase of the Iron Age.

Beyond this, we do not propose to deal with the vexed subject of Bushman or Cave Paintings as such, except to remark on the relation subsisting between them and the Rock Engravings, already discussed by Goodwin<sup>3</sup>) and to suggest that this art also was developed in the open, and was applied

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<sup>3</sup> Goodwin, A. J. H.: Vosburg: Its Petroglyphs. *Ann.S.Afr.Mus.*, 1936, XXIV, pp. 163-210.

by the artists to the interiors of caves and shelters, only after these places had, through long association with their people, acquired a numenous quality in their eyes.

The correlation we have suggested between Wilton implements, paintings, and scraps of pottery, is by no means complete; but it is strengthened by the presence of slag and iron tools in the relevant strata in certain cases. Such melanges are clearly the result of contacts with more advanced peoples. As the pottery is invariably of a Bantu or a Hottentot facies, there can be no doubt as to the origin of these intrusive elements in the Wilton culture; for the evidence seems to imply that the fragmented sherds (and by inference the slag and iron tools as well) were imported by the Wilton and/or Bush people themselves, and not by the alien hands of the people who originally made them.

These generalities can be illustrated by a few case-histories from the well-known sites of Bambata Cave, Madiliyanga, Salisbury Commonage and Cathkin Park.

#### *Bambata Cave.*

Bambata Cave is situated in the southern face of a prominent hill of that name in the Western Matopos. The formation of the cave is due to the negative spheroidal weathering of the native granite. The interior is decorated with some of the finest examples of South African cave paintings and has been partly filled up by a mass of debris many feet in depth. The initial exporation of this debris was commenced by Arnold and Jones in 1918 and carried to depths of between 4 feet 6 inches (150 cm.) and 8 feet 3 inches (250 cm.) over an area of 27 feet by 2 feet 6 inches (8.23 m. x 40 cm.). The cultural sequences disclosed by these and subsequent excavations are irrelevant here, for our present concern is with the pottery and the other objects associated with it.<sup>4</sup>

The uppermost level to the depth of about a foot was called by the excavators the Ash Layer. It contained a variety of objects, including a fire-stick, a number of hard

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<sup>4</sup> Arnold, G., and Jones, N.: Notes on the Bushman Cave at Bambata Matopos. *Proc.Rhod.Sci.Assn.*, 1919, XVII, pp. 7-21.

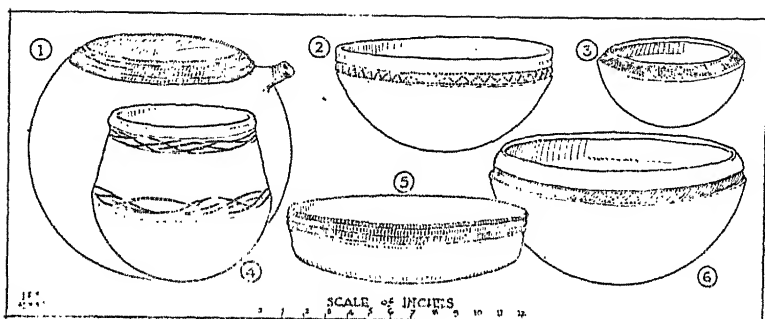


Figure ii

## POTTERY FROM MUMBWA AND BAMBATA.

1. Conjectural restoration of a globular pot with a spout. In a dark brown clay with a matt surface. NMByo.
  2. A bowl from Mumbwa. In a grey clay with a brown matt surface. RLM.
  3. A bowl from Mumbwa. As last.
  4. A cone-necked pot from Mumbwa. In a grey clay with a brindled surface. RLM.
  5. A shallow bowl from Bambata. As No. 2. NMByo.
  6. A bowl in a grey clay with a brindled grey surface. From Mumbwa. RLM.
- Note.—All these vessels have been restored from fragments.

seeds and a wooden needle (all indicative of a recent occupation) as well as pottery and a few implements of chalcedony and quartz with quantities of debitage. Below the Ash Layer true Wilton implements were taken, the best being found at a depth of 3 feet.

Pottery was not only found in the Ash Layer, where, according to the excavators, much of it is to be attributed to the Roswi, and therefore is to be dated to the 18th or early 19th centuries, but also with the Wilton material as well (two important pieces being found at the depth of 4 feet 6 inches—7.5 m.). With the exception of these Roswi wares, none of which has survived, the remainder of the pottery, all of it in very small fragments, falls into three categories, as follows:

- (i) A piece of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery (Caton-Thompson's Class A from Zimbabwe) decorated with impressions made with a twisted wire, from a depth of 4 ft. 6 in. (150 cm.)
- (ii) Two pieces of comb-decorated pottery, similar to wares from Touppe in British Bechuanaland.

- (iii) The bulk of the wares, including two spouted vessels, bowls, both shallow and deep, globular pots, beakers, and pots with flared necks. The most striking characteristic of this pottery is the manner in which the decoration is carried over the lip of the vessel, giving it the appearance of having a crenellated edge. Of the 13 vessels represented, it was possible in eight cases to form an approximate estimate of the diameter of the pot.<sup>5</sup> (fig. ii, 1 and 5).

This material would lead us to believe that, during the heyday of their industry, the Wilton people were in touch with a metal-using folk who practised some form of Bantu culture. We need not picture these folk as living in their immediate vicinity, for they may have brought their sherd of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery from a considerable distance as they were accustomed to bring the raw material for their lithic industry.

The accumulations of the Ash Layer are probably mainly to be attributed to the burning of the grass bedding and other domestic activities of Bantu refugees, rather than to those of the original owners of the site. This, however, is a point upon which a definite decision is not possible, owing to the lack of a more detailed stratigraphical record of the pottery.

#### *Madiliyangwa.*

Madiliyangwa is another painted rock shelter in the Matopos which has been excavated by Jones.<sup>6</sup> The pottery, which in this instance was also highly fragmented, occurred only in the uppermost layer of the deposit, and with one exception it all belongs to Class R<sub>1</sub> of our classification. It would appear therefore that the abandonment of this shelter by the Wilton folk may have synchronised with the accumulation of the fourth foot (90—120 cm) of the Bambata Cave deposits.

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<sup>5</sup> Schofield, J. F.: A Report on the Pottery from Bambata Cave. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1940, XXXVII, pp. 361-72.

<sup>6</sup> Jones, N.: Madiliyangwa Rock-Shelter. *Occasional Paper of the Rhodesian Museum*, No. 2, pp. 26-31.



*Salisbury Commonage.*

The shelter on the South Commonage at Salisbury, excavated by Schofield in 1924, is part of a prominent granite outcrop. It was made by the toppling of a large boulder on to its smaller neighbours which now partially support it, to form a rough pent-house, the boulder constituting the roof. There is ample evidence of the use of the shelter by primitive people in the paintings decorating the supporting boulders and part of the underside of the roof, and also in the debris with which it has been partially filled.<sup>7</sup>

The surface of the deposit, to a depth of 4 inches (10 cm) was found to consist mostly of ash, and contained pottery, broken glass, a wooden dish and an upper quern stone. Below this the deposit was found to consist of three horizons, A, B, and C, measuring, respectively, 6 inches (15 cm), 15 inches and about 14 inches (35 cm) in depth. Bed rock was reached at an average depth of 3 feet 3 inches (1 m) below the original surface.

In horizon A, an iron ring and a cowrie shell were found. Pottery fragments were plentiful, and so were roughly-made quartz flakes. In horizon B, the pottery fragments decreased in number as the work proceeded. A piece with a graphite burnish was found about the middle of the horizon, but very little was taken at a lower level. Iron slag had a similar vertical distribution to that of the pottery, but none was found below the middle of the horizon, which also contained a quern stone, exactly similar to the one from the surface. The implements represented a Wilton industry and were made on quartz, jasper and chalcedony. In horizon C the implements were larger and rougher than in horizon B, and were almost all of them made on quartz. It came therefore as a surprise to find a single piece of pottery in this horizon. The fragment probably belonged to a shouldered pot and was decorated with a rough fleur-de-lys made with a four-pointed comb, also used in making a band of diagonal impressions below the rim. This pottery is a characteristic piece of our

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<sup>7</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Salisbury Commonage Sites. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1932, XXIX, pp. 772-777.

Class R<sub>1</sub> wares. Its position indicates that a considerable period must have elapsed between the date at which it was deposited and that of the pottery found at higher levels.

The material from this shelter illustrates once more the fondness of the Wilton people for scraps of pottery, and also the length of time which they and the makers of these Iron Age wares had been in touch with each other before they finally abandoned the shelter.

*Cathkin Park.*

Various sites in this area were investigated by the University of the Witwatersrand Expedition, and the results published in *Bantu Studies* for June 1933, Wells being responsible for the section dealing with the ceramics.<sup>8</sup>

The sites included a number of small caves and two open sites. Four of the caves contained deposits, yielding implements belonging to a nondescript lithic industry with a Smithfield aspect, and paintings. In the others practically no stone implements were found with the exception of grindstones. One of the open sites had been used for smelting iron.

The pottery associated with the Late Stone Age deposits was relatively thin, and finished on the outside with a smooth surface, the colour ranging from a warm buff, through a reddish brown, to a deep purple. It had been broken into very small pieces, but from three of these fragments, found in the Inkosazana shelter, it was possible to decide that the parent pot had a distinct carinated profile and was about 10 inches in diameter. Such pottery is quite different from any known local wares, either ancient or modern; but it is very similar in colour, rim section, and carinated profile, to that made by the Ronga in Portuguese East Africa, about 200 miles away.

Of the pottery recovered from the other shelters and the open sites, the most interesting was an exceedingly thick and crude ware, including five complete pots. These are roughly cylindrical in shape with flattened bases, and varied between 7 and 3 inches (18-8 cm) in diameter.

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<sup>8</sup> Wells, L. H.: *Ancient Metal Working, Ceramics, and Beads from Cathkin Park. Bantu Studies*, June, 1933, pp. 183-93.

All this indicates that the first-mentioned type of pottery had been obtained by the Bushmen on one of their migrations. The second type was described by Laidler as representing a mingling of Bantu and Bushman techniques. In other words, dear reader, it is just the sort of pottery that you and I would make if we were driven by extreme poverty to extemporise our own cooking vessels, as were the refugees from Bantu tribes, who had been driven into the mountain fastnesses where they made these rough pots to serve their immediate needs (<sup>8</sup>p. 188).

#### POTTERY FROM UNDECORATED CAVES AND SHELTERS.

The size of the pottery sherds recovered from the deposits in these sites suggests that we are dealing with domestic debris, and in some instances we can be quite sure that such is indeed the case. How far this indicates a modification in the habits of the original Stone Age inhabitants, rather than an alternating occupation with the Iron Age folk, is a difficult question, but the evidence from Nyazongo seems to point to the former as being the correct solution—at least for that site.

The presence of pigments in the deposits of these shelters is almost as frequent as it is in those in the painted caves. This seems to indicate that it is unwise to assume that, because such and such a colour had been used in the paintings, these paintings were necessarily made by the people amongst whose debris the corresponding pigment had been found. We may be sure that primitive people had many uses for pigments besides the decoration of the walls of their caves.

To illustrate these points we will proceed to examine the evidence from Mumbwa Caves, Northern Rhodesia, Gokomere and Nyazongo Shelters in Southern Rhodesia; Umgazana Cave on the Pondoland coast; and Oakhurst Shelter, near George.

#### *Mumbwa Caves.*

These caves, which are situated in a limestone bluff about halfway between the Lukanga Swamp and the Kafue river, were excavated in 1930 by the Italian Expedition under Commander A. Gatti, the results being published by Dr. R. A. Dart and Signor N. del Grande.<sup>9</sup> This work brought to light

<sup>9</sup>Dart, R. A., and del Grande, N.: The Ancient Iron Smelting Cavern at Mumbwa. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1931, XIX, pp. 379-427.

a quantity of pottery, chiefly from the uppermost 12 inches (30 cm) of the deposits. Part of this is now in the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, and it was not until 1939 that the remainder was published by Wells.<sup>10</sup> In this paper Wells maintained that highly decorated pottery had been found at a depth of about 6 feet (2 m) from the surface, in association with a Late Stone Age culture and skeletal remains showing Bush Boskop affinities. This evoked a reply from Schofield<sup>11</sup>, who pointed out that the term "Late Stone Age" (as used by Dart and del Grande) covered both the Middle and the Later Stone Ages; that the skeletons had been enclosed in tombs, from which no pottery had been recovered. Further, the pieces illustrated by Wells were obviously related to the fragments from the Iron Age level—if indeed they did not form part of the same pots. Schofield accounted for the unusual depth at which some of the pottery had been found by pointing out that the deposits were more or less in conformity with the dome-shaped mass of cave earth upon which they rested. It was evident that a certain amount of displacement had occurred by material slipping down the sides of this mass, particularly where it adjoined the cave walls.

These conclusions were confirmed by further excavations which were undertaken by Clark in 1939.<sup>12</sup> In both the sites he examined he found a preponderance of pottery sherds at or near the surface only. Thus in his Area I, 99.4% of the pottery came from the first foot of the excavation, and 69% of the stone implements lay below this, while in Area II the relative figures were respectively 98% and 71%.

This pottery, together with that previously collected by Gatti, was found to present some interesting features. The most characteristic vessels of the assemblage were the carinated cone-necked pots (fig. ii, 4), with their necks decorated by

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<sup>10</sup> Wells, L. H.: A Study of the Ceramics from the Deeper Levels of the Mumbwa Caves, Northern Rhodesia. *Man*, September, 1939, XXXIX, 63.

<sup>11</sup> Schofield, J. F.: A Study of the Ceramics from the Deeper Levels of the Mumbwa Caves, Northern Rhodesia. *Man*, September 1939, XXXIX, 146.

<sup>12</sup> Clark, J. D.: Further Excavations (1939) at the Mumbwa Caves, Northern Rhodesia. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1942, XXIX, pp. 133-201.

vertical columns of zigzag stamp marks; bowls with bands of deeply impressed decoration giving the effect of false relief; deep carinated bowls (fig. ii, 3 and 6), and pots with concave necks. The wares generally have obvious affinities with Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery, more particularly the bowls (fig. ii, 2), and to a less degree the carinated cone-necked pots; and also with the present-day pottery of the Soli of the Lusaka district, where the stamp decoration is most commonly employed. A few of the pieces are similar to pottery from Bambata, which in turn resembles wares from Toupye in British Bechuanaland. Much of the evidence goes to show that the caves were used as dwelling places. They appear to have been screened with wattle and clay partitions, for example. This use is borne out by the pottery, which is in larger pieces than the fragments generally found in painted caves. We find that, out of the 31 vessels or parts of vessels illustrated in Clark's paper, it was possible to determine accurately the diameter of 6, to form an estimate regarding 16 of them, and only 9 were found to be too fragmentary for measurement, indicating very clearly that we are dealing with domestic breakages.

There can be no doubt at all but that the affinities of our pottery are with known Bantu wares, and that it was made and decorated by methods still employed by the local peoples. There can also be no doubt regarding its association with the Wilton industry, since on Area I 31% of the total of all implements recovered came from the Iron Age Layer, while on Area II the figure was 29%. All of these implements belonged to the Wilton industry, which itself included only a fraction of the total number of the implements recovered. Therefore the Iron Age Layer and its implements represents a very considerable factor in the whole Wilton industry at Mumbwa. From this it seems to be very probable that the lower part of the Iron Age Layer was laid down at a period when the Wilton people were learning to appreciate the pottery of their Bantu neighbours, and were modifying their culinary practices accordingly.

Just as the making of ground stone axes (another modification of their practices) was also a late arrival, and it is possible that the two events are not unconnected.

*Gokomere.*

The excavation of both the Cave and the Tunnel sites at Gokomere disclosed large masses of midden material containing Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery—evidently domestic refuse superimposed on strata containing Wilton implements, but definitely separated therefrom. As Father Gardner puts it,

"To the investigator, the most striking feature of this site was the way in which both of the floors drew a definite line between the Stone Age and the Iron Age. There was no Stone Age work above that line, nor were there any sherds below it." (13p. 222.)

Nevertheless, on a neighbouring open site, which Father Gardner called W x N Site, a small Class R<sub>1</sub> pot of undoubted antiquity was discovered at a depth of 2 feet beneath the surface where it was associated with Wilton implements (14p. 10), thus confirming similar discoveries at Bambata and Salisbury Commonage.

*Nyazongo Shelter.*

Nyazongo mountain is situated 20 miles to the north of Penhalonga and 10 miles from the eastern frontier of Southern Rhodesia. The shelter, formed in a huge granite boulder on the western side of the mountain, was excavated by Mrs. C. Martin during the autumn of 1937.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the most striking result of her work was the discovery of 12 ground stone axes in the upper two feet (60 cm) of the deposit, which also contained all the pottery that was taken. Charcoal was found to a depth of 4 feet (120 cm) below the surface, but was present in quantity only in the first foot. Red ochre was found to a depth of 4 feet (120 cm) and iron slag to a depth of 3 feet (90 cm).

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<sup>13</sup> Gardner, T., Wells, L. H., and Schofield, J. F.: *The Recent Archaeology of Gokomere, Southern Rhodesia. Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1940, XXVIII, pp. 219-53.

<sup>14</sup> Schofield, J. F.: *Pottery from Bechuanaland and Rhodesia. Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1943, XXX, pp. 1-16.

<sup>15</sup> Martin, C., Stapleton, P., and Wells, L. H.: *A Rock Shelter on Nyazongo Mountain. Occasional Paper No. 1. Queen Victoria Memorial Library, Salisbury.*

As Father Stapleton has shown, the lithic industries belong to the Bambata culture in the fourth foot of the deposits; to a mixture of Bambata and Wilton in the third foot, and to Wilton above that level. The stone axes are a late and unusual development of that culture.

The pottery was not so fragmentary as that from the painted caves, for Wells, who described it, was able to determine the diameter of five of the vessels with great accuracy,<sup>12</sup> indicating that we are dealing with the remains of domestic utensils. Wells classified the pottery under four groups, as follows:

The first group included a rough type of pottery, practically identical with modern Manyica wares, which Mason had found in crude stone constructions on Nyazongo mountain.<sup>13</sup> The second group consisted of a small collection of sherds which resembled the first group and also some of the pottery from the pit-circles. The third group comprised the bulk of the pottery found, identical with the wares recovered in abundance from the pit-circles by Mrs. Martin and Mason. The fourth group was a burnished variety of the third.

No stratigraphy could be observed in the distribution of this pottery throughout the upper two feet (60 cm) of the deposits, and the few sherds recovered from the second foot include examples from the first three groups. They were, therefore, being made and used in the same locality at the same time. Nor need there be any doubt but that they all belonged to the same family of which modern Manyica pottery is a surviving member.

Now all this is a very interesting and important matter, for the builders of the pit-circles were unquestionably cattle-herding agriculturalists, using and smelting iron and certainly using copper, also wedge-shaped polished stone implements for finishing their hut floors, and stone querns for grinding their corn. All these activities appear to have been going on within a few hundred yards of a community of Wilton folk who were engaged in enhancing their traditional lithic industry by the addition of ground stone axes.

Clark has suggested (<sup>12</sup>p. 190) that the percentage of these axes at any one site would be determined by the prevailing ecological conditions; thickly wooded country requiring a greater percentage than open grassland or scrubland, where axes would be few or entirely absent. An ironstone or even a dolerite axe is a poor tool to use for the felling of trees, and at Nyazongo at least it would be asking altogether too much to expect the Wilton folk to engage in an extensive scheme of deforestation with such tools, when living on the same mountainside with them were people who were well acquainted with iron tools (<sup>16</sup>p. 577). Surely it is more probable that they borrowed the idea of their "axes" from the querns and floor-smoothers of their Bantu neighbours. In any case, the "axes" would be much more suitable for the grubbing up of roots and tubers than tree felling, which only becomes a necessity when a community adopts an agricultural mode of life, and land has to be cleared for the growing of crops.

We have assumed that the pottery, although not made by the Wilton people, was being used by them. We believe this to have been the case, because the only alternative explanation that would meet the facts would postulate an alternating occupation of the site by Iron Age and Stone Age folk, and for this there seems to be neither evidence nor reason. The Bantu community had its farms and houses in the immediate vicinity, and would have no purpose in abandoning them for the cold comfort of Nyazongo Shelter. We suggest, therefore, that in the use of this pottery by the Wilton folk we have an indication of another modification in their traditional ways of life, brought about by the example of the more advanced Bantu.

#### *Umgazana Cave.*

The excavation of the Umgazana Cave on the Pondoland coast, some 10 miles south-west of Port St. Johns, was undertaken by Messrs. Chubb, King and Mogg towards the end of December, 1932.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Mason A. Y.: The Penhalonga Ruins, Southern Rhodesia. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1933, XXX, pp. 559-81.

<sup>17</sup> Chubb, E. C., King, G. B., and Mogg, A. O. D.: A New Variation of Smithfield Culture from a Cave on the Pondoland Coast. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1934, XXII, pp. 245-68.



The deposits were found to consist of thirty strata, with a total depth of over 8 feet (2.45 cm). Pottery made its appearance in the fourteenth stratum from the floor of the cave, where the decorated rim of a straight-sided pot about 13 to 14 inches (33-36 cm) in diameter was found (pl. viii, 1). The rim had been formed by thinning out the wet clay, doubling it over to the outside, and then pressing it back against the pot wall in such a way as to form a line of shallow thumb marks. Altogether it was an elaborate piece of work, and although its exact counterpart has not been recorded, it can be identified as being the work of the same people who made the pottery which Schofield has classified as NC<sub>2</sub>, and who used similar methods in the decoration of their pots. From the remainder of the deposits fragments of vessels with notched lips were taken, very similar to the wares made by the Thembu, and also to other types of the NC<sub>2</sub> pottery from the coastal sites of Natal<sup>18</sup> (pl. viii).

Now, it is evident that the pottery did not belong to the original cultural inheritance of the Later Stone Age people who inhabited the cave, because they must have been there a considerable length of time; sufficient to have accumulated about 4 feet (1.2 cm) of debris, before they discarded a single sherd. This sherd belongs to a class of pottery found on a number of sites which have never yielded a single stone implement. It is evident therefore that the pottery cannot belong to the Umgazana Variation of Smithfield A, of which all the other artifacts formed part, but must be due to neighbourly intercourse between peoples who had very different cultural inheritances.

There is ample evidence, in the size of these sherds and their soot-blackened condition, of their having been used for cooking. Thus they indicate how the habits of a Late Stone Age people were being modified by this intercourse. A further indication of this is to be seen in the cleanly cut points of the wooden pegs which occurred between the fourth and the four-

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<sup>18</sup> Schofield, J. F.: A Description of the Pottery from the Umgazana and Zig-zag Caves on the Pondoland Coast. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, 1938, XXV, pp. 327-32.

teenth strata. Such points could only have been cut with a metal blade.

*The Oakhurst Shelter.*

The Oakhurst shelter is situated about 13 miles east of George and two miles inland from the coastal lakes. The occupational deposits in the shelter have a depth of about 9 feet (3 m), and were excavated by Goodwin during 1932-1934.<sup>19</sup>

The pottery, all of which came from the surface, none of it being found at a greater depth than 9 inches (23 cm), belonged to the wares usually found on open sites, which we associate with the Hottentots (pl. i). The majority of the material was broken into very small pieces, and may be another example of the liking our old cave dwellers undoubtedly had for bits of pottery. But from other sherds it was found possible to reconstruct two of the pots. One of them was a well made ovoid pot with a conical neck, about 10 inches (25 cm) in height and 8 inches (20 cm) in diameter, a typical example of Hottentot pottery (pl. i, 2). The other was a roughly made cooking pot, about 8 inches (20 cm) over the rim. It had evidently been used for its proper purpose, but whether by the Wilton inhabitants of the cave, or by a wandering Hottentot, it is impossible to say. We can, however, be very certain that none of the pottery was made by the cave dwellers who were responsible for the lithic industry.

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<sup>19</sup> Goodwin, A. J. H., Drennan, M. R., and Schofield, J. F.: *Archaeology of the Oakhurst Shelter, George. Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Afr.*, 1938, XXV, pp. 229-324.

## II.

### BUSHMAN POTTERY.

#### *Introductory.*

The Bushman has been aptly called a living fossil, and he is indeed one of the last surviving Stone Age peoples of the world. It therefore happens that when we are dealing with his pottery, or any other aspects of his life, we are not entirely dependent on inferential evidence culled from his dwelling places, his middens or his graves, but also on the accounts of actual observers of his ways, whose records have been preserved to us.

The use of the term "Bushman" presents us with some difficulties. If we are to regard the Bushman as a living fossil, then there can be no logical reason for not treating his pottery under the previous chapter, as belonging to the Late Stone Age; but on the other hand, in his struggle for existence during the last century, the Bushman abandoned his art. Despite the popular ascription of all the rock-paintings in the country to him, we propose to use the term "Bushman Pottery" to describe those wares made and/or used by him after he had ceased to decorate the walls of his caves with pictures. Both these events, the loss of his art and the acquisition of pottery, are closely related, for both are modifications of his traditional culture brought about through his contacts with more advanced peoples.

#### *Historical.*

The word Bushman (or its earlier form, Bosjesman) seems to have been applied first by the Dutch to escaped slaves in their South American possessions, who took to the bush to escape the rigours of their servitude, and the name is still used in Dutch Guiana to describe their descendants, who are mostly of mixed Negro and Amerindian blood. In South Africa we find the word being used in a similar manner towards the end

of the 18th century, when it was synonymous with "brigand" or "outlaw", and had no racial implications whatsoever.

As the early colonists pressed inland, breaking up whatever organisation there may have been amongst the indigenous peoples, there was always just ahead of their outposts a nomansland, inhabited by murderers, stock-thieves and all and sundry who had made their native haunts too hot for them. These and the broken remnants of Hottentot tribes were indiscriminately called Bushman.

It was natural therefore that the same name should be applied to the little yellow-skinned hunters, who led an untamed existence in the wildest and most inaccessible fastnesses of the country, and who could never learn to distinguish between wild game and cattle, whether they belonged to Bantu, Hottentot or White man.

Apparently the only record by an eye-witness of pottery-making by the Bushman is from Dr. Daniel Kannemeyer, who tells us that they used their grindstones for breaking down grass stalks and incorporating them in the clay used for pottery. He also tells us that many springs were closed by the Bushman and that worked stones are to be found in the "eye" of almost any spring and complete pots in the mud. All of this refers to the upper reaches of the Orange River.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Bleek has also left an account of the methods used by the Bushman. According to his informant (Klein Jantje, from the Kaaienveld), the clay was dug by the women, who on their way home gathered stems of male grass which they pounded with the clay, adding water until it was soft and workable. The pot was then formed, the woman rolling the clay between her hands. When it was finished it was put in the sun to dry and anointed with fat to keep it from splitting. Powdered gum was then put into the pot and boiled with water, some of the infusion being ladled over the outside of the pot with a spoon made from a springbok's horn. If there were springboks about the husband killed one and brought back the blood in its

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<sup>1</sup> Kannemeyer, D. R.: *Stone Implements of the Bushmen*, etc. *Cape Illust. Mag.*, 1890, I, pp.120-130. (Cited from Goodwin, A. J. H., *The Loom of Prehistory*. The South African Archaeological Society. The Rustica Press, Ltd., Cape, 1946, pp. 31-34.)

stomach. The blood was boiled in the pot and the pot was emptied and allowed to dry. Water was then put into it and it was used for cooking meat, due care being taken that marrowbones were not split in the vicinity.<sup>2</sup>

All this savours more of magic than sound pottery-making; Klein Jantje says nothing about firing the pot, but as a married man he might have been hunting the springbok when that crucial operation was going on. Nevertheless, blood is used by some of the Southern Sotho to give a finish to their pots, and a few pieces of pottery have been found which have had grass mixed with the clay, the most important of them being a shallow dish about a foot in diameter and three inches deep. It was decorated with impressions made with a grass belt to give the general idea of a basket, found at Norval's Pont on the Orange River. A similar admixture was noted in four pots from Cala, in a rim fragment from a shelter near Albany (3p. 781), a fragment from Cofimvaba, three specimens from Bushman's Hoek, Sterkstroom, and in a number of fragments from Smithfield B home-sites at Vosburg.<sup>4</sup>

The use of grass as a filler appears to be the sole distinguishing feature of Bushman pottery. It would have the effect of holding the unburnt pot together during the process of drying—more particularly if, as in Klein Jantje's account, it was put in the sun to dry. The rarity with which grass-filled pottery has been found indicates that it was not a generalised practice; unless indeed we are to understand that, in common usage, it was not burnt at all, and therefore has reverted to its original clay. It has been held that this pottery is associated with the Smithfield C industry, but at present there is insufficient evidence to justify such a statement.

The willingness with which the Bushman adopted other folk's pottery is shown by Daniell's print, "Bosjesmans frying Locusts". The family is pictured watching the process with interest. In the background there is a mat hut, at one side there is a large red pot with ears and a flat base, standing

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<sup>2</sup> Bleek, W. H. I., and Lloyd, L. C.: *Specimens of Bushman Folklore*. Allen. London, 1911, pp. 343-47.

<sup>3</sup> Laidler, P. W.: *Hottentot and Bushman Pottery of South Africa*.

<sup>4</sup> *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1929, XXVI, pp. 758-86.

on two stones. In the foreground there is a digging-stick, complete with pierced stone weight, and an ostrich egg decorated with red chevrons. The pot, but for its colour and the lip finished with a bold roll instead of having a flared neck, is similar to a Hottentot pot from the Pella Mountains, in the South African Museum (No. 2578) (pl. i, 7).

*Pottery from Bushman Sites.*

From time to time pieces of pottery, generally broken very small, are picked up in shelters that are associated with the Bushman. Such sherds are frequently ascribed to those people, who are also held responsible for any small, crude pottery vessels, under whatever circumstances they may have been found. In some cases such pottery may actually have been made by the Bushman; but any pieces which display any distinguishing features at all (pl. i, 9), other than the use of grass, always show clearly enough that, when they are not of Hottentot or Bantu manufacture, they have been imitated from the wares of those peoples.

Nothing could demonstrate this more clearly than the collection made by E. J. Dunn, during the late '70's of last century. It would appear that he found only two reasonably complete pots. One of them, with obvious Hottentot affinities, was taken from the "eye" of a spring at a depth of 9 feet (2.75 m) on the farm Osse Hoek, Camdeboo, Cape Province (<sup>6</sup>p. 84, pl. xvii, xix and xx). The other, a little beaker bowl, has been reconstructed from fragments found in a small cave on the farm Kaffir Kraal, near Stormberg, and is very similar in size, shape and decoration to beakers from Touppe in British Bechuanaland. All the remaining pieces are small fragments only, and most of them are decorated with the "all over" patterns also found amongst the Class NC<sub>2</sub> wares from Natal<sup>6</sup> (pl. viii, 4 and 5).

The resemblances we find between this pottery and the wares of the Hottentots and the Bantu reflect the actual circumstances under which the makers of the three kinds of pottery

<sup>6</sup>Dunn, E. J.: *The Bushman*. Griffin. London, 1931.

<sup>6</sup>Schofield, J. F.: *Natal Coastal Pottery from the Durban District: A Preliminary Survey. Parts I & II. S.Afr.Journ.Sci.* XXXII, pp. 508-527, 1935, & XXXIII, pp. 993-1009, 1936.

lived for several centuries. Generally their relations were those of mutual hostility, but nevertheless there was a good deal of intermarriage, particularly between the Bush and the Sotho tribes. Also the holding of the Bushman in servitude by the Hottentots and the Bantu must have initiated him (however unwillingly) into some of the arts and crafts of his masters. Nor do the great distances which separate these sherds from their suggested prototypes invalidate our suggestion; for the Bush peoples habitually covered hundreds of miles in their migrations, as is shown by the existence of drawings of marine animals in the Fouriesberg district, more than 200 miles (320 km) from the sea.<sup>7</sup>

*Occasional Pottery.*

In South Africa it is the common practice to ascribe any small roughly-made pot to the Bushman, e.g. the little eared pots at Otto's Bluff, Natal,<sup>8</sup> those illustrated by Laidler (<sup>3</sup>Pl. XII), and those by Péringuey (<sup>9</sup>Text fig. 19).

In some instances the designation may be correct enough, the pots may have been used or even made by Bushman, but the fact remains that they are all either Bantu or Hottentot in their inspiration, or else have no distinguishing features at all.

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<sup>7</sup> Wells, L. H.: Marine Animals in a Rock Painting near Fouriesburg, O.F.S. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1946, XLII, pp. 236-39.

<sup>8</sup> Chubb, E.C., and Schofield, J. F.: Rock Engravings at Otto's Bluff, Natal. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1932, XXIX, pp. 678-80.

<sup>9</sup> Péringuey, L.: The Stone Ages of South Africa. *Ann.S.Afr.Mus.* 1911, viii.

### III.

#### HOTTENTOT POTTERY.

##### *Introductory.*

The name *Hottentot*, which we apply to the pastoral nomads of the Cape, was not the name by which they described themselves. In their own estimation they were Khoïn-Khoïn, that is "men of men", or in other words the very pick of humanity. The word *Hottentot* seems to have been derived from some such exclamation as "houtitou", with which they punctuated their dances, and took its present form during the last quarter of the 17th century. Prior to that time their European visitors had referred to them as "negroes" or "cafres".<sup>1</sup>

All the early records agree that these people possessed great herds of fine cattle and flocks of long-haired sheep, their only other domesticated animal being the dog, "like those of Portugal". They derived almost their whole subsistence from their domestic animals, eked out with hunting and such edible roots, tubers and berries as their womenfolk could collect from the veld. They rode their cattle with reed saddles, and also used them as pack animals in their continual migrations in search of fresh grazing grounds. All the cattle were trained to immediate obedience of their calls and whistles, and to give cover to their masters when attacking an enemy, or even to charge the foe with ferocity.

For arms they had assegais or sticks of hardwood, tipped with bone or horn, but more frequently hardened in the fire. These they threw with such deadly effect that at a short distance they could transfix a man. In their attacks they threw showers of stones, either by hand or with slings. For close combat they used clubs. The bow is not mentioned by the earlier writers, but by the time of the Dutch occupation it was in general use.

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<sup>1</sup> du Plessis, J.: The Name *Hottentot* in the Records of Early Travellers. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1932, XXIX, pp. 660-67.



Their huts were made of reed mats supported on a light framework of bent sticks, their only furniture being a depression in the ground in which they slept under a covering of skins. On their frequent *déménagements*, the mats and the sticks of the framework were bundled up and loaded on the back of a pack-ox with the aid of long forked sticks on which the family utensils were suspended, all as admirably pictured by Daniell<sup>2</sup> in his print "Korah Hottentots preparing to Remove".

They were not entirely ignorant of metals, for they valued them very highly, being willing to exchange an ox or a sheep for a few nails or a piece of copper. They appear to have acquired the art of forging iron shortly after the European occupation, for Dapper, writing in 1668, stated:

"By watching our countrymen, however, they have learned to forge for themselves the points of their darts and assegais from bits of old iron, which they find thrown away by us here and there."

For clothing they used the skins of animals, and for ornaments their entrails, set off with ivory bracelets which also served a defensive purpose.

#### *Origin of the Hottentots.*

The origin of these people has exercised the ingenuity of the learned for many years. It was held that their language had affinities with the Hamitic tongues of north-east Africa, and that their pottery was derived from the pointed pots of pre-dynastic Egypt, where their breed of cattle appear to have been introduced from Asia about the end of the third millennium B.C. The routes by which the Hottentots are supposed to have reached South Africa are given in most books on the subject and usually include the completely waterless stretch of the West Coast, which would have effectively destroyed both the Hottentots and their cattle had they attempted to go that way.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Daniell, C.: *African Scenery and Animals*. Second Series, undated.

<sup>3</sup> *The Early Cape Hottentots*. Van Riebeck Society. Cape Town, 1933.

From all this welter of speculation, two things are reasonably clear:

1. The Hottentot race developed here in South Africa from a primitive negroid type (<sup>4</sup>p. 275).
2. Their cattle belong to the lateral-horned Zebu type, of which representations occur on Egyptian monuments dating from 1,500 B.C., although introduced much earlier. These cattle were the progenitors of the modern Afrikander breed, now found chiefly in the north-western part of the Orange Free State (<sup>5</sup>p. 673). It is interesting to note that Schofield suggested this area as being the centre from which the Hottentot tribes were distributed (<sup>4</sup>p. 300).

Thus we would suggest that long ago (certainly before the Bantu with their Sanga cattle had entered South Africa) a community of people, with a culture similar to that of the present-day San tribes of South-West Africa, came in contact with folk who owned cattle of the lateral-horned Zebu type. Under the guidance of some divinely gifted man, they refrained from slaughtering out of hand, and became cattle-owners themselves. The fruits of his genius were seen in the benefits of a stabilised food supply he conferred on his people, thus enabling them to prosper exceedingly.

#### *Historical.*

The first European to encounter people of the Hottentot race was Diego Cão. He had been sent by King John II of Portugal to explore the coast of Africa to the south of the river Congo, and in 1485 he erected the cross at Cape Cross in South-West Africa. According to de Barros he made several expeditions into the interior and captured two natives whom he took back to Lisbon.

At that time the commanders of all the Portuguese expeditions had instructions to capture a few of the natives of the

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<sup>4</sup> Goodwin, A. J. H., Drennan, M. R., and Schofield, J. F.: *Archaeology of the Oakhurst Shelter*, George. *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Afr.*, XXV, pp. 229-324, 1938.

<sup>5</sup> Curson, H. H., and Thornton, R. W.: *A Contribution to the Study of African Native Cattle*. *Andersterpoort Journ. Vet. Sci. Ani. Ind.*, 1936, VII, No. 2, pp. 613-739.

lands they visited and bring them back to Portugal, where they could be taught the language and used as interpreters on subsequent voyages. It was, in fact, this practice that brought such disaster on the Portuguese that thereafter they avoided the southern coast of Africa, unless driven by urgent necessity.

The subsequent success of the Dutch in making good their foothold where the Portuguese had failed so signally was due in no small measure to the improvements that had taken place in their fire-arms during the intervening 140 years. But the relations between the Hottentots and their invaders remained hostile, until by a long drawn-out process of impoverishment and attrition they were reduced to a condition of servitude.

With the Dutch occupation our information regarding the Hottentots becomes much more detailed and some mention is made of pottery-making. Thus, William Ten Rhyne (1686) states that "the richer amongst them make most beautiful pots for use in cooking" (3p. 253).

Writing in 1695 from information collected from earlier observers, Grevenbroek tells us, "The women also make earthenware vessels quite skilfully out of moistened clay. They dig up the clay and carry it home, where it is cut up into portions the size of a walnut. These are placed on a skin and sprinkled with a little water from time to time to prevent their getting too dry. They are then kneaded into little cylinders, like bottles, each an ell long. The first step is to mould the clay into a circle to form the bottom of the pot; then by further modelling they make a deep or wide vessel as suits their fancy and the law of proportion. This is polished and smoothed inside and out with the fingers and with a sea-shell, and smeared all over with a red colouring matter rather like minium (cinnabar, red lead). The pot is then left for a day or two in the same house in which it was made, well covered with a skin or mat, lest it gets too much air or wind, and so dry too quickly and fall into cracks. Finally the pot is stuffed with dry cowdung, provided with handles and placed on a bright fire. After baking it is ready for various uses".<sup>8</sup>

Kolbe (1704-1713) noted that clay from anthills was used, and that after ridding it of sand and gravel it was mixed with

ants' eggs. The pot was moulded on a flat stone, and after drying it was burnt to a jet black.<sup>5a</sup>

Sparrman (1772-1776) remarks that it is "an uncommon thing for a Hottentot to have earthen vessels of his own manufacture for the purpose of boiling or stewing his victuals" (<sup>6</sup>Vol. II, p. 368). Le Vaillant (1781) remarks that the Hottentots used their exceedingly brittle earthenware for the purpose of melting grease (<sup>7</sup>vol. II, p. 72). In 1919, an aged Hottentot from Little Namaqualand told Laidler that his mother (who was a pure Nama) used one of the ground stone objects like rolling-pins for mixing the clay for pot-making (<sup>8</sup>p. 761).

*Provenance of Hottentot Pottery.*

The nomadic existence led by a Hottentot tribe did not lend itself to the accumulation of great masses of debris from which the archaeologist can reconstruct their past. Their pottery has become known to us only from sporadic examples found on our coastal sites from Walvis Bay to Umhloti, or in the river valleys of the Cape Province, the Orange Free State and Natal. Thus it happens that Hottentot pottery is comparatively scarce and little known.

<sup>5a</sup> Kolb, P.: Cited from *Reise zum Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung*, Leipzig, 1922, by Shapera, *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*. G. Routledge and Sons, London, 1930, p. 313.

<sup>6</sup> Sparrman, A.: *A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope from 1772-1776*. 2 vols. Dublin, 1785.

<sup>7</sup> Le Vaillant, F.: *Travels into the Interior parts of Africa*, 1780-1785. London, 1796.

<sup>8</sup> Laidler, P. W.: *Hottentot and Bushman Pottery of South Africa*. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1929, XXVI, pp. 758-86.

[In this monograph Laidler classified the pottery under six types; three are Hottentot, two Bush and the other is Bantu. Ornamentation is described under 42 heads, admixtures to the clay under seven, lips under five and lugs under eight heads. According to Laidler the Hottentots originally derived their pottery from pre-dynastic Egypt. He traces them in a trek along the South African coast from the Kunene River to the East London area, leaving populous oases *en route*, and also following the course of the larger rivers to their source. This trek was marked by a progressive degeneration of the pottery as the Hottentots became increasingly bastardised with the Bush, always excepting the extraordinary renaissance in the Albany-Port Elizabeth section. The chief value of the article lies in the facts recorded, rather than in the theories advanced to explain them.]

Generally speaking the pottery has been found on the surface, exposed by the action of the wind under conditions that give it no pretension to any great age. In one instance, recorded by Father Stapleton, pottery was found at a depth of 6 feet (1.8 m) from the surface in an eroded bank of the White River at Dunbrody Farm. A bed of fresh-water mussel-shells had been exposed, 6 feet (1.8 m) in length and 3 inches (8 cm) deep, which contained sherds of two types of pottery; the one was thin, yellow and hard, the other was red or black, thicker and friable; from this material several normal Hottentot pots have been reconstructed. Father Stapleton noted that mussels were no longer to be found in the river; this and the depth of the sherds beneath the surface, led him to consider them to be of a respectable antiquity. But surface levels of sandy soils may change very quickly, and changing ecological conditions of the watershed, particularly those resulting from modern farming practices, will be reflected in a changed river fauna. The Dunbrody pottery is therefore, in all probability, no older than similar wares from other sites.<sup>9</sup>

Our pottery has also been recorded from a number of cave sites, of which Oakhurst Shelter, already described,<sup>4</sup> is a typical example. Unfortunately, in too many instances the records regarding it are so meagre that we can only say it has been found in the upper layers of the deposits in each instance.

*A Description of Hottentot Pottery.*

Hottentot pottery includes some of the finest and best made of all the primitive wares of South Africa, with some others having none of these excellent qualities; for, as among ourselves, most of their families possessed vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour. The clay for the better-class wares was very carefully prepared, all foreign bodies were removed, while the frequency with which fine sand, and even powdered mica, are present in the pottery makes it probable that these were added deliberately as fillers, and are not to be accounted for as accidental inclusions in the clay.

From the examination of many examples, it would seem that it was the usual practice to commence a pot with a ring

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<sup>9</sup> Stapleton, P.: Note on a Find of Strandloper Pottery at Dunbrody on the Sunday's River. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1919, XVI, pp. 229-31.

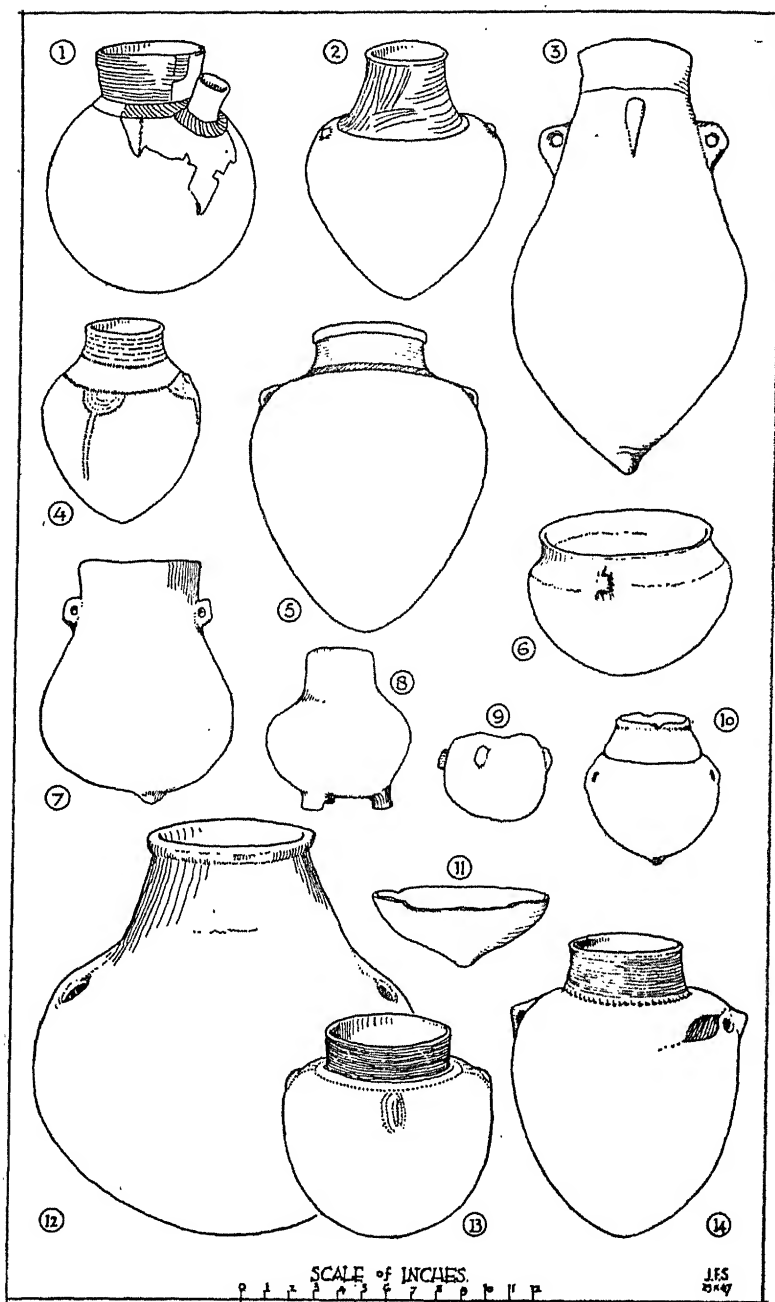


PLATE I.

## PLATE I.

## HOTTENTOT POTTERY.

1. A globular pot with a flared neck and a spout; about 8 inches (20.5 cm.) in diameter. From Committee's Drift on the Great Fish River. AM. Restored from fragments.

2. A pot with a pointed base and a conical neck,—decorated with finely scratched lines. The two small bosses on the shoulder were pressed up from the interior. There are traces of red colour on the exterior. From Oakhurst Shelter, George. UCT. Restored from fragments.

3. A shouldered pot, with disc lugs from near Pella on the Orange River. There are two bosses on the neck, shaped like inverted cones. The pot has a burnished brown surface that shows specular particles. AS.

4. A shouldered pot from Rietfontein, Zuurberg, Cape. There are two small bosses on the shoulder. The four motifs were formed with short incisions and by rubbing the finger on the wet clay. Similar lines were drawn round the neck. There are traces of red colour on the exterior. The neck is restored in the drawing. SAM.

5. A shouldered pot with horizontally pierced lugs. The neck was decorated with lightly scratched lines and a band of diagonal lines was made round the shoulder. From Jeffrey's Bay. PEM.

6. An irregular bowl, reconstructed from fragments. Measuring 6½ inches (17 cm.) and 7½ inches (18.75 cm.) over the rim, with vertically pierced internally reinforced lugs. The surface was coloured red. From a grave in Bushman's Land. SAM.

7. A pot with a vertical neck and disc lugs. The surface is mud-coloured and smooth. From Pella mountains, Namaqualand. SAM.

8. A three-legged pot with a deep red surface. Said to have been found in a river bed at Aberdeen. Probably Hottentot in origin. PEM.

9. A small pot, 3¼ inches (8.3 cm.), over the rim, with three imperforate bosses. From near the mouth of the Kleinmond river, Port Alfred. After Schönland. S. On some Hottentot and Bushman pottery in the collection of the Albany Museum. Rec. Albany Mus. I., 1903.

10. Pot with a convex neck and horizontally pierced lugs. The neck and upper part of the body are coloured red and the remainder is black. From a depth of 4 feet (1.22 m.), at Ladismith, Cape. SAM.

11. Bowl, about 7 inches (18 cm.), over the rim. In a gritty black clay with a smooth surface. Made by cutting down a larger vessel. Part of the circumference of the rim has been ground. From Kleinsee. MMK.

12. A large shouldered pot with horizontally pierced lugs. From Coldstream. PEM.

13. A globular pot with a short vertical neck, decorated with grooved horizontal lines. On the shoulder are four date-shaped motifs in relief with lines of point impressions. There is a line of similar impressions round the base of the neck. The surface is light brown above and black below. From Sea View. PEM.

14. A pot with a vertical neck. The bridges of the horizontally pierced lugs are tip-tilted. The neck has light horizontal incisions and a ring of circular point impressions at its base. Near the orifice of one of the lugs is a lenticular mass of diagonal incisions. The surface was coloured red. From Blaauberg, Cape. SAM.

of clay on a flat surface, on this the walls were built up with added rings or coils until the body was half made. The work would then be smoothed and set aside in the shade to dry. When it was hard enough to handle, the rest of the body and the base were added. The pot was again dried, and if it was intended to have a neck, this would be made separately and welded to the pot. Finally the lugs (if any) were formed and the pot was burnt.

It is also likely enough, as Laidler's informant stated, that the stone "rolling pins" were on occasion used in preparing the clay for pottery, but it is hardly likely to have been a general practice, for the supply of these rare objects would never have been equal to such a demand.

There are several technical practices which, although all of them are not entirely unique, serve to distinguish Hottentot pottery from all its compeers:—

- (i) The use of *horizontally pierced lugs*. These may be:
  - (a) Ring or disc lugs. These, as the name implies, are more or less shaped like a ring and usually placed on the shoulder of the pot. In the best examples they have always been pressed up from the interior of the vessel, welded into, or worked up from the pot wall.
  - (b) Internally reinforced lugs (fig. i, 1). The mark that sets this pottery apart from all other South African wares is the use of the internally reinforced lug. It would appear that it was made by compressing a lump of clay into a lenticular mass between the palms of the hands, and then forcing it into wall of the unburnt pot (usually on the shoulder) with one hand, while the outside of the pot was supported with the cupped palm of the other hand. The projecting boss thus formed was usually pierced in a horizontal direction. The orifices were rounded off, and the bridge between them moulded to a ridge, or even to a tip-tilted point, or left smooth, apparently in accordance with the whim of the maker or the shape of the pot. These lugs, and more particularly the pointed ones, have a strong though entirely fortuitous resemblance to the "owl-face" motif prevalent in the eastern Mediterranean during the second millenium B.C.



(ii) The use of *stud lugs*. These are projecting studs on opposite sides of the neck of the vessel and usually welded into the pot wall, that may have served for the attachment of sling handles (fig. i, 2).

(iii) *Pottery with pointed bases* was, and probably still is, made by two South African peoples: the Dama and the Herero. Writing in 1838 of the Hill Dama, Alexander noted that "clay cooking pots of a conical shape were in every hut" (<sup>10</sup>Vol. II, p. 135), and Vedder says of the Herero, "It was women's work to make earthenware pots, with narrow necks, wide middles and pointed bottoms, and to bake them in hot wood-coals" (<sup>11</sup>p. 46). Unfortunately these two sentences contain all that we know regarding the wares of these peoples, with whom the Hottentots had for long been associated, with the Dama as overlords and with the Herero as rivals.

Pointed vessels also occur further afield in Africa, for they have been recorded amongst the Soko of the lower reaches of the Aruwimi River in the Belgian Congo (where the pots have no lugs, but are provided with raffia slings by which they are suspended,<sup>12</sup> and of course amongst the pre-dynastic Egyptians. But neither of these sources is likely to have influenced our wares; the first from the great distance which separated the peoples concerned, and the second, as the even greater distance is paralleled by as vast a difference in relative chronology.

However these things may be, we would suggest that the prevalence of the pointed base amongst the Hottentot wares may have been fostered by the following factors:—

- (a) The natural and simplest way to finish a pot, that is built up from the neck, is with a pointed base.
- (b) When pots are habitually suspended, the necessity for a modification of the process in order to produce a flattened or a rounded base will not arise.

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<sup>10</sup> Alexander, J. E.: *An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa*. 2 vols. London, 1838.

<sup>11</sup> Vedder, H.: *South West Africa in Early Times*. Oxford University Press. London, 1938.

<sup>12</sup> *Annales du Musé du Congo*. Tome II, plate xvii.

- (c) The pot with a pointed base can be easily pressed into the hot ashes of a fire, where it will boil more readily than a pot with a round or a flat base.
- (d) We believe, too, that fashion had much to do with its continued use, and we suggest that this trait was selected for particular emphasis (indeed, as far as the limits of the material permitted) because most of the Hottentot potters felt that a pointed base was the fit and proper form for a pot to have.
- (iv) *The Oval Section*.—The larger pots were sometimes made elliptical on the horizontal section, the lugs being placed on the line of the major axis, a refinement that would fit them for ox transport.
- (v) Instances of pots with *tubular spouts* have been recorded, one on a highly decorated pot is from Committee's Drift, in the Albany district (pl. i, 1), and another is in the National Museum, Bloemfontein. Others are known from the Cape Peninsula. It is probable that these spouts were intended to permit the contents of a sealed pot to be drawn off with a reed without first opening it up.
- (vi) *The Treatment of Rims*.—The rims are treated in a variety of simple ways: rounded, finished with a roll which may even be formed out of a different kind of clay from the rest of the pot. Some pots have a distinct rim-band; or, in a characteristic manner, the neck just below the rim may be thickened out to give a slightly convex contour on the outside of the vessel (pl. i, 10).
- (vii) *Decoration*.—On the whole, Hottentot pottery is not richly decorated, and although pieces do exist which show taste and originality, they are very scarce indeed. Such decoration as we find may be classified under three main heads.
  - (a) *Decoration moulded on the pot*.—It frequently happens amongst primitive people that their decorative motifs are derived from structural features. This generalisation is illustrated from our pottery by the way in which serviceable lugs are imitated by decorative bosses, which may be pressed up from the interior of the pot, planted on, or worked up from, the pot wall (pl. i, 2, 4 and 13).

- (b) *Surface Decoration*.—In all except the commonest pottery, the surface was smoothed, burnished or given a matt finish, and very frequently coloured with ochres or blackened in addition. The smoothed surface seems to have been produced by rubbing the pot over with a wet hand while it was being formed, and any colouring matter was rubbed into the surface before it was burnt. The burnishing was probably done with a smooth pebble, as amongst the Bantu potters, before burning. The matt finish may be due to the weathering away of a surface that was originally burnished.
- (c) *Graphic Decoration*.—The usual way in which Hottentot pottery was decorated was by means of lightly scratched hatching on the neck of the vessel and lines of point impressions; sometimes wide parallel lines or dots may be used which have the appearance of having been rubbed into the dried pot before it was burnt; examples of this type of decoration have been recorded from Kheis and Reids Drift on the Orange River and also from Port Alfred (<sup>8</sup>pl. xi, d, e and h). Another type of decoration was also found at Reids Drift, in which a band of cross hatching had been made below the rim of the pot, apparently while it was still green. The pot seems to have been rubbed over with a brown ochre and the hatching made with a blunt implement that hardly marked the surface except at the foot of the stroke, elsewhere it merely pressed the colour into the clay and thus made a dark line.

Pottery with more elaborate decoration is very rare. A little shouldered pot from Rietfontein, Zuurberg in the Cape has a small boss on the shoulder on either side. Round the neck there are lines of small incisions and grooves formed by rubbing a finger on the wet clay, similar grooves and incisions form the Y-shaped motifs that decorate its body (pl. i, 4). A globular pot from Sea View, Port Elizabeth, has raised date-shaped motifs on the shoulder that are covered with point marks (pl. i, 13). Another globular pot with a spout from Committee's Drift, on the Great Fish River, has bands of diagonal incisions and lines with graduated point marks run-

ning down the body (pl. i, 1). These three examples serve to show the diversity of the decorative schemes adopted.

*Types of Pottery Utensils.*

Dunn relates that in 1871 he encountered a band of Hottentots at Zendeling's Drift, with their large pots for cooking or holding water, and their small basins used for eating (14p. 88); they were therefore provided with practically the whole range of their pottery vessels.

Large pots are found both with and without necks. The necks may be either flared, vertical or conical—the last often having a tendency to a convex section. A few examples of shouldered pots and pots with concave necks have also been found. The shape of the body is subject to a great deal of variation. The general proportions may be relatively squat (with the greatest diameter approximating the height) or more elongated. In section the body may approach an egg-shape, or it may resemble a peg-top or a lemon, or again it may have a rounded base, as is frequently the case with the coarser wares, but pots of the finest quality, and more particularly those with perforated ears, may have this feature. There are a few pots with virtually flat bases, or with the point so reduced that it is nothing more than a vestigial knob.

Very few basins have been described; there is one from Bushman's Land in the South African Museum (pl. i, 6), another from Kleinsee, in the McGregor Museum, Kimberley (pl. i, 11) and others in the Albany Museum. There is also a small pot with three feet, from Aberdeen, in the Port Elizabeth Museum, that probably belongs to a Hottentot facies (pl. i, 8). From this it will be seen that Hottentot pottery comprises a very small range of types, but as far as the pots are concerned, a great variety of form and detail.

*Distribution of Pottery Types.*

The features we have described enable us to recognise Hottentot pottery wherever it may be found, but certain details are found more frequently in one area than in another, for example, the ring lug is common in the west and rare in the

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<sup>14</sup> Dunn, E. J.: *The Bushman*. Griffin, London, 1931.

east, the flared neck has a similar distribution. The internally reinforced lug has not been found further north than the Orange River, it is rare at East London, but has been frequently recorded from sites between the Cape and Albany.

*The Origin of Hottentot Pottery.*

We have already seen that Hottentot pottery has certain distinguishing features that set it aside from all other primitive wares in South Africa: the thin, well-burnt fabric, the oval section, the internally reinforced lugs, and, to a less extent, the pointed base.

Nevertheless, the way in which the pots were made is very similar to that employed by the Kikuyu, save that these people do not use the pointed base, and the lugs of their pots are not reinforced. The pointed base is also made by the Dama and the Herero, while the decoration with bosses and finely-scratched lines (and also to some extent the fabric) are traits that are shared with some of the Ovambo tribes. It would seem, therefore, to be very likely that the Hottentots, and also the Dama, received their initial impulse in pottery making from such people as the Ovambo or the Herero, who combined agriculture with the herding of cattle which (as we shall see later) probably belonged to one of the Sanga sub-types, and are, comparatively speaking, late arrivals on the South African scene. But whether this impulse came from one, or from several directions, the contribution of the Hottentots was unique and revolutionary, being designed to adapt the pottery for transport by their pack-oxen.

Thus we have the anomalous case of a nomadic people developing a type of hard, well-burnt earthenware for use with their pack animals. It is, however, pleasing to record that both they and their descendants have long since adopted orthodox nomadic practices. The introduction of the bamboo by the early Colonists provided them with a source from which unbreakable vessels could be made very easily, so by the beginning of last century these *bambus*, as they were called, were being used for their milk pails. The great increase in the numbers of their iron or steel tools, resulting from their intercourse with Europeans, enabled them to carve wooden vessels until, as Engelbrecht relates of their present

day descendants (the Korana), pottery is unknown amongst them. Any earthenware they require they obtain from the Bantu, although some Bloemhof men thought they had had pots before (<sup>15</sup>p. 88).

The great variety of detail found in such a relatively small amount of material, and the entire absence of any evidence of the continued use of Hottentot pottery over a long period of time, all combine to give the impression that it never attained any degree of fixity, either of form or decoration, but actually ceased to be made before it had emerged from the experimental stage.

The extinction of the art of pottery making amongst the Hottentots was brought about, along with that of their other cultural traits, by their general impoverishment and final reduction to a condition of servitude, that took place towards the end of the 18th century, although the art seems to have lingered on for about another hundred years in out-of-the-way places.

It seems therefore very probable that the introduction of pottery amongst the Hottentots did not antedate the European occupation by any lengthy period, and it is suggested that the three centuries between c.1470 and 1770 would allow ample time for the accumulation of the deposits in which it is known to occur.

#### *Gonaqua Pottery.*

Certain rough wares from the Eastern Province have been ascribed by Laidler<sup>16</sup> to the Gonaqua, who were a Hottentot people much influenced by, and finally absorbed into, the Xhosa clans during the latter part of the 18th century, but beyond reference to "coarse Gonaqua pottery" he made no attempt either to describe or illustrate the material. In such circumstances we must regard it as being either Bantu, or as belonging to the coarser type of Hottentot wares, which we may be sure would survive after the making of the finer pottery had been discontinued.

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<sup>15</sup>Englbrecht, J. A.: *The Korana*. Maskew Miller Ltd. Cape Town, 1936.

<sup>16</sup>Laidler, P. W.: Localised Developments in the Potter's Art of the Pre-Bantu Races of South Africa. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, 1940, XXVIII, pp. 512-20.

PART FOUR.  
THE IRON AGE.

I.

ETHNOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION.

It may seem somewhat rash to equate the dawn of the Iron Age in South Africa with the arrival of the Bantu, but in fact all the available evidence points irresistibly in that direction. With the exception of the Hottentot wares, all the pottery so far recovered from ancient deposits belonged to people who practised an Iron Age culture, and all the features of their pottery, and indeed those of their material culture as a whole, were such as we associate with the Bantu people.

It is hardly necessary to remind our readers that primarily the word Bantu is used to denote the group of languages used by some 50,000,000 people living in Central and South Africa. Therefore, although the word may be properly used to describe any other elements of their cultural heritage, it carries with it no racial implications whatsoever. It is of course true that the great majority of these people belong to a Negroid stock, but undoubtedly considerable sections of the pre-Bantu inhabitants of the country have been incorporated, and to such good purpose that at the present time the services of a physical anthropologist would be required to distinguish them from their neighbours.

In South Africa, this process of assimilation has been most marked amongst those tribes that came into direct contact with the earlier inhabitants, and it has left its traces in the clicks found in the Nguni and Sotho language clusters, and also in the Hottentot derivation of much of the cattle terminology used by the Xhosa, this being due to the absorption of the Hottentot tribe of the Gonaqua during the latter part of the 18th century. Therefore, we have no qualms in calling any people Bantu, so long as they practised the Bantu way of living, notwithstanding the fact that, as at Mapungubwe, they may have belonged to Boskopoid stock or may display any other physical characteristics.

*The Bantu Cultural Heritage.*

The cultural status enjoyed by the Bantu tribes after they had migrated into South Africa, was in all probability closely akin to the common denominator of their present cultures, but in a rather more generalised form—for we must make due allowance for the operation of selective emphasis, whereof certain examples have already been noted. We may therefore enumerate the following principal traits as including with many others the essential elements of their culture:—

1. A tribal system that included :
  - (a) Initiatory ceremonies for boys and/or girls.
  - (b) The integration of cattle belonging to the Sanga type with the tribal unit.
2. Cattle tending and the making of wooden vessels by the men.
3. Hoe agriculture and pottery-making by the women.
4. Iron and/or copper working by the men.

*Cattle, Languages and Traditions.*

Before the impact of European civilisation our knowledge of the Bantu races of South Africa is contained in a few obscure notices left us by the mediaeval Arabian geographers, and in such inferences as can be drawn from the distribution of cattle, Bantu languages and traditions.

The intimacy of the relationship subsisting between the Bantu and his cattle (that culminates amongst the Herero in veritable adoration), has undoubtedly exercised a most potent influence on the circumstances that brought the Bantu tribes to their present homes. We know from the records of last century how the lust for cattle directed the tide of conquest and to what straits the remnants of once powerful people were reduced through the loss of their herds. We may well believe that such has been the case ever since their forebears crossed the Zambesi on their southward migrations. It is not at all unlikely but that these migrations were made possible by fluctuations in the tsetse fly infestation along the valleys of the Zambesi, Okavango and the Kunene Rivers, where fly-belts impose a formidable barrier to the movement of cattle.



Be that as it may, there are at the present time in South Africa three sub-types of the Sanga cattle, each owned by a separate section of the Bantu people, viz., the Bechuana, the Zulu and the Makalanga breeds (<sup>1</sup>pp. 662-672).

The Bechuana or Mangwato cattle are spread over a great area, including the northern half of the Transvaal, with the exception of Vendaland; the whole of the Bechuanaland Protectorate; western Matabeleland; the western part of Northern Rhodesia; the north-eastern part of South-West Africa and the south-eastern part of Angola. Another large area of Angola and the whole of Ovamboland is in the range of the Ovambo cattle, a nearly related stock. Nor is this all, for it was the dominant breed in Basutoland, until it was ousted by non-descript herds of European origin during recent years. This distribution has been augmented in recent times by the Matabele incursion to the north of the Limpopo, by the opening up of the Copper Belt in Northern Rhodesia, and during the 16th century, by the spread of Bechuana cattle into Hereroland and Damaraland. Thus we may regard their original area as corresponding very closely to that occupied by the Sotho tribes.

The Zulu cattle are found in the eastern coastal belt, between the Zambesi and the Umtamvuna Rivers. Probably the range was at one time even greater, but the Cattle-killing delusion amongst the Xhosa in 1856 so depleted the native herds that today both Ciskei and Transkei are occupied by European cattle. Thus we can recognise the Zulu cattle as representing the ancestral stock of the Tonga and Nguni peoples.

The Makalanga cattle are found in eastern Matabeleland, in Mashonaland and in Vendaland and may be considered as peculiar to the Shona and Venda peoples, who were probably the latest arrivals to the south of the Zambesi.

There was also, up to quite recent times a breed of dwarf cattle in eastern Mashonaland for whose accommodation the Pit Circles of Inyanga and Penhalonga were constructed.

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<sup>1</sup>Curson, H. H., and Thornton, R. W.: A Contribution to the Study of African Native Cattle. *Onderstepoort Journ.Vet.Sci.Ani.Ind.*, VII, No. 2, pp. 613-739, 1936.

The manner in which his cattle influence the whole life of the Bantu is further demonstrated by the association of each of these sub-types of cattle with a definite type of village plan; thus the Bechuana cattle are associated (at least over the eastern portion of their range) with the Sotho type of village, where an irregular cattle-pen occupies the centre with irregular enclosures for dwellings grouped around it.

The Zulu cattle are associated with the Tonga-Nguni village plan with a central circular cattle pen (the Pit Circles, mentioned above, are a specialised variation of this plan) and the Makalanga breeds with the Shona-Venda type of village, in which the cattle-pens are situated outside, but adjacent to the hutting area.

When we turn to the linguistics of the Bantu we find what appears to be a clearer picture, with six main clusters: the Sotho, the Nguni, the Shangana-Tonga, the Shona and Lemba, the Venda, Herero and Ovambo. This grouping represents something that is fundamental in the ethnic history of the people; for it is reflected in territorial distribution, in the distribution of their cattle, and in a very definite manner in their pottery traditions.

### *Historical.*

During the last century and a half, the recurring tides of barbarian and civilised invasion have between them swept away almost all the memories of tribal traditions over the greater part of South Africa, with the result that such relics as survive can be grouped under three heads:

- (i) Vague legends regarding tribal origins and migrations.
- (ii) Genealogical lists of chiefs, usually containing from ten to twenty names.
- (iii) Traditional history relating to the events of the last hundred years.

The history of South East Africa may be said to have commenced about the year 1150, with the founding of Sofala as a dependency of Kilwa.<sup>2</sup> From then, until the Portuguese

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<sup>2</sup> Marconnes, F.: *The Two East African Sofalas and King Solomon's Ophir. Nada*, XIII, pp. 59 ff, 1935.

seized the place and erected the fortress of San Gaetano in 1505, the Arab merchants extended their ventures into the far interior, establishing regular routes and markets where the native products of gold and ivory were exchanged against the cloth and beads they imported from India.

The advent of the Portuguese caused the Arabs to divert the export of gold from Sofala to Sena (or Ynhaperapara, as it was then called), and from thence along the Que-Que branch of the Zambesi to such East Coast ports as still remained under their control. This sudden dwindling in the flow of gold from the interior caused the Captain of Sofala to despatch Antonio Fernandes in 1513-14 on a mission to the court of the Monomotapa, and it is from his report that we learn all we know regarding the routes and markets frequented by the Arab merchants.<sup>3</sup>

Mobara—inhabited by light-skinned, cow-worshipping cannibals—probably at the confluence of the Umzengedsi with the Zambesi, was the furthest point in the interior at which Fernandes encountered the “Moors”, or Arabs, although according to de Barros’ often quoted account of Zimbabwe, they appear also to have penetrated as far as that place about the year 1530. But by the middle of the 17th century their trade had been entirely taken over by the Portuguese, and the survivors had taken refuge in the kingdom of Maungo (probably the Rusapi district of Southern Rhodesia), where, cut off from all communication with the outside world, they probably gave rise to the Lemba, many of whose practices are reminiscent of Islam (<sup>4</sup>vol. III, p. 486).

At its greatest extent the Empire of the Monomotapa appears to have embraced the greater part of Southern Rhodesia. Its centre lay in the kingdom of Beza (that is, the territory between the Mount Darwin district and the Zambesi), with loose dynastic suzerainty over what is now Portuguese East Africa to the south of the Zambesi. Fernandes

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<sup>3</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Footnotes to The Journeys of Antonio Fernandes. *Trans. Rhod. Sci. Assn.*, XLII, in press.

<sup>4</sup> Theal, G. M.: *Records of South-Eastern Africa*. Clowes. London, 1899.

could still regard it as the paramount power from the Mazoe to the sea; but its zenith was soon past, and the outlying provinces began to fall away. The process of decay was hastened by fresh barbarian invasions from beyond the Zambesi in 1570 and in 1602. Even more ruinous in their ultimate effects were the attempts at king-making by the Portuguese, which plunged the country into a series of civil wars, and the establishment of "prazos" or independent chiefdoms by Portuguese adventurers. The final blow was dealt by Changamire and his Roswi about 1693. From this, neither the Portuguese power in the interior nor the Monomotapa ever recovered.

The peoples of this Empire and neighbouring lands may be briefly described as:

- (i) The subjects of the Monomotapa, called Mokaranga by the Portuguese, who occupied the Midlands of Mashonaland and the territory as far north as the Zambesi valley. They belonged to the Shona division of the Bantu.
- (ii) People called Botonga, living along the Zambesi below the confluence of the Mazoe, and to the east of the Escarpment Range. They were the ancestors of the Tonga tribes of Southern Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa and perhaps the Roswi and Venda as well.
- (iii) The subjects of the king of Butua who at one time ruled over the southern part of Southern Rhodesia. They were probably a part of the proto-Sotho inhabitants of the country, and ancestors of the Pedi tribes of the Northern Transvaal.
- (iv) The subjects of the king of Mōbara; perhaps of Boskopoid or Hottentot physical stock.
- (v) The descendants of Arab traders, who probably became the ancestors of the Lemba people of Southern Rhodesia and Vandaland.

Shona influence penetrated much further afield; for it can be traced in the ancient pottery of Zululand and Natal, and also amongst the Herero and Ovambo as well, but until further descriptions of the material culture of these people are available no definite statements are possible.

The Roswi invasion appears to have brought an end to the Kingdom of Butua; for Dhlo-Dhlo, Nanatali, Regina and Zimbabwe, all situated within its erstwhile boundaries, became the seats of the Roswi Mambos, until they in turn were swept away by the Nguni invasions of the early part of last century. It is from the devastation caused by these last disasters, and the more peaceful penetration of European ways, that some relics of the material culture of the old inhabitants (including their pottery traditions) have survived to the present day.

## II.

### THE ANCIENT POTTERY OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA.

#### *Introductory.*

The Protohistorical field of Southern Rhodesia, from whence we derive the materials for our study, is divided into two distinct sections; a Western Complex including the Zimbabwe group of ruins, the sites with terraced walls and the Limpopo Valley sites, and an Eastern Complex including the Inyanga, Niekerk and the Penhalonga ruins, together with the Hill Terraces, Pit Circles and Hill Forts. The relations between these Complexes has been dealt with elsewhere,<sup>12</sup> and it is only necessary for us to give a few details regarding the more important sites, Zimbabwe, Dhlo-Dhlo, Khami and the Pit Circles.

#### *Zimbabwe.*

Zimbabwe lies at a distance of 17 miles (27 km) to the south-east of Victoria in broken hilly country. The area occupied by the ruins readily falls into three parts: The Elliptical Ruin, or "Temple" as it is frequently called, with its high girdle wall and its tower, occupies gently sloping ground with sparse vegetation alternating with bare granite. About a quarter of a mile to the north is a prominent granite kopje, precipitous on the south, but rising with easier gradients towards the north and east. It is crowned with walled enclosures contrived between the boulders that form its summit, and is known as the "Acropolis". On the low ground between the Temple and the Acropolis, and stretching for about half-a-mile towards the east, is a series of labyrinthine enclosures called the "Valley of the Ruins".

#### *Dhlo-Dhlo.*

Dhlo-Dhlo is about 16 miles (26 km) to the south of Insiza railway station. The central ruin is situated on a slight

rising, in open country. Its chief interest lies in the elaborately decorated tiered walls of the northern and westerly facades.

### *Khami.*

The ruin-field at Khami consists of a group of walls and enclosures situated on small kopjies along the banks of the Khami River, about 14 miles (22 km) to the north-east of Bulawayo. They belong to the same general class as Dhlo-Dhlo, and exhibit many examples of decorated walling.

### *Pit Circles.*

The ruins of the Eastern Complex are found in the highlands along the Portuguese Border, from Penhalonga in the south to Nani in the north, a distance of about 90 miles (145 km).

The Pit Circles are one of the most numerous as well as the most curious of the remains of this old civilisation. These constructions are always sited with the main axis at right angles to the contours of a hill-side. Essentially they consist of a central pit, lined and paved with stone, from 20 to 30 feet (6-9 m) in diameter and about 6 feet 6 inches (2 m) in depth. The pit is surrounded by an earth platform accommodating four to eight wattle and daub huts, with their attendant grain-bins and stores. The pit was approached by an underground passage, like it, stone-lined, and measuring about 26 inches (65 cm) in width with a height of 50 inches (1.25 m), passing directly under the floor of the principal hut. On the opposite side of the pit was a small drain, also stone-lined, running under the platform to discharge on the hill-side.

Many theories have been advanced to explain these constructions, but they were undoubtedly a specialised development of the village planned with a central cattle pen, and were originally evolved as a result of the practice of building huts time and again on the same site, until the cattle-pen was submerged by the rising mass of debris. They fell into disuse when their owners adopted a breed of cattle too large to pass through the underground entrance.

### *Merensky and Mauch.*

The first person in modern times to interest himself in the protohistory of Rhodesia was undoubtedly the Rev. A.

Merensky, for many years the Superintendent of the Berlin Mission in the Transvaal and a zealous student of Native customs and traditions.

Merensky's known writings are confined to newspaper articles and a pamphlet, dated 1875, published in Berlin. Of this, according to Mendelssohn, only one copy (now in the British Museum), has survived. It refers to "Sofala, Solomon's Ophir", and the "new discoveries in South-East Africa". His views, therefore, would have remained obscure had not a Colonel H. M. Walmsley brought out a novel *The Ruined Cities of Zulu Land*, in 1869, inspired, so he tells us, by one of Merensky's manuscripts. Certainly throughout the greater part of the first volume, Merensky (under a thin disguise) is riding his hobbyhorse at full gallop, and it is interesting to discover from it that the chains, still supposed by some to bind the ancient civilisations of the Mediterranean basin to South Africa, had already been forged in all their essential links.

Merensky appears to have heard of the existence of the Zimbabwe ruins from Chief Sekukuni of the Pedi, who had spent some time there in his youth. When his friend Mauch discovered the Tati Goldfield in 1866 riddled with "ancient workings," it confirmed his theories that South Africa was indeed King Solomon's Ophir. Captain Lindley might show the workings to have been made by Mashona miners in the recent past (<sup>1</sup>p. 284); Hartley might say that Mzilikatzi had provided Mauch with guides who knew where gold had been worked in former times (<sup>2</sup>p. 26); Baines might find mining on the reef in operation and obtain a sample of the gold won by the Shona miners (<sup>2</sup>p. 480) but nothing could change his opinions.

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<sup>1</sup>Lindley, A.: *After Ophir*. Cassel, Patter & Galpin. London, 1870.

[This is a brightly written and profusely illustrated account of a journey from Durban to the recently discovered Tati Goldfield. Captain Lindley gives an interesting description of the conditions he encountered and of the ancient workings.]

<sup>2</sup>Wallis, J. P. R.: *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines*. Chatto & Windus. London, 1946.



In September 1871, Mauch, with the help of Merensky, succeeded in reaching Zimbabwe. His accounts of the place are disappointingly brief, but fortunately he mentions the survival of the constructional timbers in the lintels of doorways and roofs of galleries—a circumstance that should have filled his scientific mind with doubts as to the antiquity of the place, but in fact did not shake his faith in his mentor's theories in the least.

*W. Posselt.*

The next visit to Zimbabwe with which we are acquainted was made by Mr. W. Posselt in 1888. He attempted to remove a soapstone bird and its pedestal, then standing with several others on the wall of a cattle pen in the Acropolis. He was at once attacked by its owners and made his escape with difficulty. The next day he was able to purchase the bird, and also a soapstone dish and a quernlike object, both of which were lying on the surface of the ground. All these are now in Groot Schuur, Cape Town. The other birds he buried at the foot of an old wall intending to get them later.<sup>3</sup>

*Bent and Swan.*

With the occupation of Mashonland by the British South Africa Company, archaeological work on the large scale became possible and in 1891 Mr. Theodore Bent accepted the Company's invitation to conduct the expedition described in his book.<sup>4</sup> We are thus indebted to Bent for the first detailed descriptions of Zimbabwe and Matendere, notes on a number of other sites, and numerous illustration of handicrafts and customs as they existed before the Occupation had begun to disturb the ancient order.

Unfortunately the moment was unpropitious for such an enterprise. The vogue of astronomical archaeology was then at its height, and the learned busied themselves in calculating the age of Stonehenge or Karnak by first imagining an

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<sup>3</sup> Posselt, W.: *Early Days of Mashonaland*. *Nada*. II, pp. 70 *et seq.* 1924.

<sup>4</sup> Bent, J. T.: *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland*. Longmans, Green. London, 1902.

orientation for the place, then (from a comparison with its present-day equivalent), deducing the change that had taken place in the obliquity of the ecliptic. By a calculation based on the precision of the equinoxes the date of this hypothetical (but entirely imaginary) orientation was obtained. Bent was assisted in applying these principles to Zimbabwe by a Mr. R. M. W. Swan, who acted as his surveyor. He discovered that the whole of the Temple ruin had been set out on a series of curves, whereof the radius was a mystical number, embodied in the relation between the large and the small cones. Not only so, but the same methods were applied with equal success to the elucidation of the enclosures of the Acropolis, and indeed to every piece of walling they encountered throughout their travels.

Bent also rediscovered the soapstone birds where Posselt had buried them near a ruined hut wall, or, as Bent preferred to call it, an altar. A number of soapstone figurines were also found, probably analogous of those used in their initiation ceremonies by many Bantu people. These were put down as phallic emblems, and one in particular was illustrated (4p. 188) and described as having "apparently a representation of a winged sun on its side, or perchance the winged Egyptian vulture". An examination of the illustration and also of the object itself (now in the South African Museum) leaves no doubt that the "winged sun" is a well marked umbilical boss with lateral lines of tatooing on either side of it, similar to the tribal body markings Bent himself recorded on the grain-bins, smelting furnaces and other things in daily use amongst the people he visited.

Beyond indulging in classical allusions, such as those already mentioned, Bent is non-committal as to the builders of Zimbabwe. But he left us one piece of most convincing evidence as to the real age of the place, for he recorded that at least one of the timber lintels, seen by Mauch twenty years earlier was still existing in 1891 (4p. 109).

*Dr. Schlichter.*

Zimbabwe was again investigated by Dr. H. Schlichter, who discovered it to be "an enormous gnomon, comprising a total angle of 120 degrees", the obliquity of the ecliptic being

somewhat more than 23 degrees 25 minutes, "which brings us (considering we have a good Chinese observation of the same period) to 1100 B.C. for the erection of Zimbabwe". In coming to this conclusion the learned doctor was assisted by the consideration of a dish of very hard wood, carved with certain signs, illustrated by Bent in the third edition of his work, and whereof he remarks: "The zodiacal pictures are such that they could not possibly be made by African savages, while they coincide in every respect with other finds which Bent and others have made at Zimbabwe". (<sup>5</sup>p. 387).

Now Schlichter was entirely right in demanding a common origin for this dish and the other material from Zimbabwe, for it is undoubtedly a Venda divining-bowl, and several scores of them must have been in daily use at the very moment he was consigning it to such an undeserved antiquity. (<sup>5</sup>p. 382).

Schlichter also visited Dhlo-Dhlo, where he found the ornamentation of the terraced walls "had, apart from solar worship, also to do with the observation of the principal planets and stars". (<sup>5</sup>p. 389). It was beneath the foundations of these walls that Caton-Thompson found a gin bottle, dated not earlier than 1700 A.D. (<sup>6</sup>p. 171).

#### *The Ancient Ruins Company.*

We can see now that Schlichter, like too many others, was using scientific jargon to rationalise his prejudices regarding the abilities of "African savages" and thus demonstrated his own lack of critical ability; but in one respect he deserves our unstinted thanks, for he brought the activities of the Ancient Ruins Company to the attention of the civilised world.

It appears that, shortly after the Occupation, the Hon. Maurice Gifford and Mr. Jefferson Clark had obtained from the British South Africa Company a concession over all the "ancient ruins" between the Zambesi and the Limpopo. In May, 1895, the consent of Rhodes and Jameson was obtained for the farming out of this concession, and the Ancient Ruins

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<sup>5</sup> Schlichter, H.: Travels and Researches in Rhodesia. *The Geographical Journal*, April, 1899, pp. 376-396.

<sup>6</sup> Caton-Thompson, G.: *Zimbabwe Culture*. Clarendon Press. Oxford, 1931.

Company was floated with a capital of £25,000 under the directorship of Messrs. Neal, Johnson and Leach. These people, popularly known as "blanket prospectors" from the reward they offered Natives to betray their tribal treasures to them, did an immense amount of damage. Neal claims to have "explored" forty-three ruins personally. But they also introduced a system of granting licences to others to carry the work of depredation still further afield. As can be readily imagined, the destruction done was beyond calculation. This can be gauged by the fact that between 1900 and 1932 not a single hoard of gold was discovered in any ruin. It is probably owing to the fact that Mapungubwe is in the Transvaal and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the British South Africa Company that its treasures escaped Neal's melting-pots.<sup>7</sup>

Following the disclosures of the vandalisms that had been committed, the Company was wound up in 1901, and Neal was employed to publish the story of his exploits in *The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia* in collaboration with Mr. R. N. Hall.<sup>8</sup>

Before publication, the joint authors had the temerity to present Chapter XII of their book, entitled "Architecture and Construction of Ancient Ruins in Rhodesia" to the Rhodesia Scientific Association as a paper, when it was subjected to very severe criticism. It was pointed out that no evidence was brought forward to show what the authors termed the 1st and 2nd Zimbabwe Styles had actually occurred in that order; that "authorities", although frequently mentioned, had been less frequently named; and that an atmosphere of cocksureness pervaded the whole work. These criticisms remained unanswered, either then or subsequently.

The book makes melancholy reading. Hall's catalogue of the objects found at Dhlo-Dhlo, for example, besides 700 ounces of gold mostly in the form of ornaments, mentions eleven other items, all of the greatest importance for the

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<sup>7</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Zimbabwe: "The Ancient Ruins Company, Limited." *Man*, XXXv, pp. 19-20, 1935.

<sup>8</sup> Hall, R. N., and Neal, W. G.: *The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia*. Methuen. London, 1902.

correct dating of the place, and thus of similar buildings elsewhere. All have completely disappeared without any other record having been made of their existence.

A few examples of pottery are recorded, the tall-necked pot illustrated on plate 4 of their book must have been a splendid piece of work. The polychrome Roswi wares of the 18th century are described as having a "Phoenician aspect" (8p. 154), and as found on the most ancient floors; thus establishing the fact that many of the most ancient buildings are not more than a couple of centuries old. While true enough, this is hardly what the authors intended.

*Franklin White.*

From about 1902, Mr. Franklin White had made a number of accurate surveys of the principal ruins, including Khami, Dhlo-Dhlo, Nanatali, Regina, and above all Zimbabwe. (9 and 10).

The last survey showed, without any exception, the measurements given by Bent and Swan in support of their esoteric theories to be inaccurate. The over-all length of the Temple, which they give as 280 ft., is really 292 ft. The width, scaled from their plan, is 235 feet instead of 220 feet. The diameter of the large cone equals neither the dimension between the centres of the cones, nor the circumference of the small cone, as they state. As these ratios were supposed to provide the mystic number, their whole theory falls heavily to the ground. Finally their north point has an error of 1 degree 39 minutes 45 seconds east of the true north.<sup>9</sup>

We may recognise in Franklin White the first investigator to approach the problems of Rhodesia Archaeology without preconceptions of any sort, and in the spirit of true scientific enquiry.

*MacIver.*

At this juncture, the British South Africa Company invited Dr. Randall-MacIver (in view of the approaching visit of the

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<sup>9</sup> White, F.: Observations on Recent Discoveries at Ancient Ruins. *Proc. Rhod. Sci. Assn.*, IV, pp. 14-20, 1903.

<sup>10</sup> White, F.: The Large Elliptical Ruin at Zimbabwe. *Proc. Rhod. Sci. Assn.*, V, pp. 11 20, 1905.

British Association to South Africa) to make a general survey of the whole protohistorical field. During 1905 MacIver carried out a rapid inspection of Zimbabwe, Inyanga, Nickerk, Umtali, Dhlo-Dhlo, Nanatali and Khami. His published work<sup>11</sup> although it suffers from the haste with which it was compiled, is of permanent value. He was the first investigator to describe in detail the pottery from the sites he visited, and thus apply to Rhodesian antiquities, criteria that are universally accepted elsewhere.

*Caton-Thompson.*

In 1929 the Rhodesian Government asked Miss Caton-Thompson to make a further investigation of the whole subject, as the British Association proposed to visit South Africa again during the following year. She carried out excavations at Zimbabwe, Dhlo-Dhlo, Matendere, Chiwona, Moshosho, and Hubvumi. Her book<sup>12</sup> contains the first classification of Rhodesian ceramics, and has provided a basis for all subsequent work on the subject.

*Classification of Pottery.*

The pottery traditions of the Bantu peoples of Southern Rhodesia may be classified under three main heads, each of which can be correlated with one of the ethnic groups whose influence has been predominant in the country during the proto-historical period—that is from mediaeval times down to the opening decades of last century.

Thus we correlate Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery with the proto-Sotho,  
Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery with the Shona, and  
Class R<sub>3</sub> pottery with the Roswi.

From this it must not be inferred that every piece of R<sub>1</sub> pottery is earlier than the Roswi invasion that took place during the last decade of the 17th century; still less that it is earlier than the advent of the Shona, who may have come into the country during the 15th century. We know very well that things do not happen in any such cut and dried

<sup>11</sup> MacIver, D. Randall-: *Mediaeval Rhodesia*. Macmillan. London, 1906.

<sup>12</sup> Schofield, J. F.: A Survey of the Recent Prehistory of Southern Rhodesia. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXVIII, pp. 81-111, 1942

manner amongst primitive societies. So far as Southern Rhodesia is concerned, the archaeological record indicates that, far from obliterating its predecessors, each new wave of Bantu invaders left them to pursue their own way of life and to make their pottery much as they had ever done. At least, that is what we learn from the exploration of Mapungubwe Hill, where a Shona royal clan, rich in gold and beads and cotton cloth, ruled a population whose practices were those of another ethnic group. Livingstone found similar conditions at Linyanti, where Sebitwane and his Lolo lorded over a Rotse commonalty.

It may seem therefore that as a means of establishing even a relative chronology for this area, our study of its pottery can have only a very limited value. This is not really the case. For example, the presence of characteristic Class R<sub>3</sub> pottery on a site must indicate that the complex in which it occurs cannot be earlier than the last decade of the 17th century when the Roswi invasion took place. When we come to Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery, we have no such convenient datum; but since the Shona empire of the Monomotapa had already commenced to decline in the early 16th century, we shall probably not be far from the mark if we attribute its commencement to the 15th century. If we go still further back to the advent of the Sotho or proto-Sotho, we have nothing more reliable to guide us than the genealogical lists of their most ancient tribes (the Thlaping and the Barolong), which indicate that they crossed the Zambesi during the 11th or 12th century (<sup>13</sup>p. 333). We may therefore date Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery, provisionally, as being not earlier than the 11th century.

#### CLASS R<sub>1</sub> POTTERY.

We are justified in regarding the pottery of this Class as being amongst the earliest wares made in Southern Rhodesia, because it has been found in direct association with Wilton implements in cave deposits at Bambata and Salisbury Commonage. In addition, at Gokomere, Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery rested directly on a bed of sand containing Wilton material,

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<sup>13</sup> Ellenburger, D. F., and MacGregor, J. C.: *History of the Basuto*. Caxton Publishing Co. London, 1912.

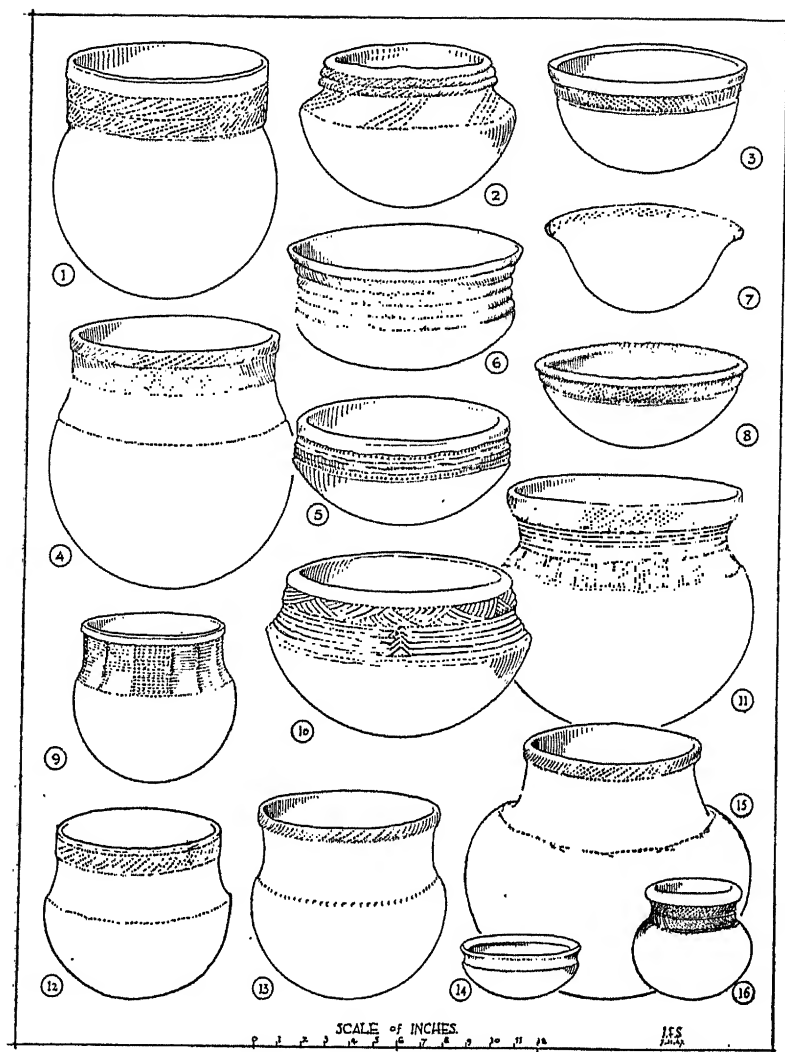


PLATE II.



## PLATE II.

## CLASS R, POTTERY.

## FROM GOKOMERE NEAR VICTORIA AND ECHO FARM NEAR SALISBURY.

1. A globular pot with a short vertical neck,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches (24 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay with a reddish matt surface.
  2. A carinated pot or bowl, with a short vertical neck, 7 inches (17.7 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay with a matt surface.
  3. A basin,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches (21.5 cm.), over the rim. The rim-band and the upper part of the interior had a grey burnish and the remainder a grey matt surface.
  4. A shouldered pot, 9 inches (22.8 cm), over the rim. In a grey clay with a buff matt surface.
  5. A bowl, about 9 inches (22.8 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay. The interior was burnished with graphite and the rim-band with black.
  6. A beaker bowl, 10 inches (25.4 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay. The interior and the rim-band were burnished black, the remainder had a grey matt surface.
  7. A basin,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches (21.5 cm.), over the rim and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches (9 cm.), deep. In a grey clay with a light brown matt surface. From Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.
  8. A bowl, about 9 inches (22.8 cm.), over the rim. In a gritty grey clay, the rim was matt and the remainder smoothed. The upper surface of the rim was slightly rippled and the interior aspect had diagonal comb impressions.
  9. A shouldered pot, 6 inches (15.3 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay with a matt surface.
  10. A carinated bowl, about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches (24 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay with the rim-band and upper part of the interior burnished and the remainder matt.
  11. A shouldered pot, 10 inches (25.5 cm.), over the rim. In a grey clay with a purple surface. The decoration was finished along its lower edge with a line of impressions from a small stylus.
  12. A carinated pot,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches (18 cm.), over the rim and  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches (17.2 cm.) in height. In a coarse grey clay with a buff matt surface. From Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.
  13. A shouldered pot,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches (19 cm.), over the rim. In a reddish clay with a grey matt surface.
  14. A small carinated bowl,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches (14 cm.) over the rim and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches (6.5 cm.) deep. In a coarse grey clay.
  15. A shouldered pot, 7 inches (17.75 cm.) over the rim and 12 inches (30.5 cm.) in diameter. In a grey clay with a matt surface.
  16. A pipkin, 4 inches (10 cm.) over the rim. In a gritty grey clay; the body was burnished black and the remainder had a matt finish.
- NOTE.—All the vessels, with the exception of No. 14, have been reconstructed from fragments.

showing clearly enough that its makers had followed the Stone Age occupants of the site before the lapse of a significant period of time had taken place (*vide supra*).

It would appear, therefore, that the makers of this pottery, who were also the bearers of an Iron Age culture, followed closely on the close of the Late Stone Age, and in some instances may have anticipated its end.

*Distribution of Class R<sub>1</sub> Pottery.*

This pottery has been recognised at Gokomere, near Fort Victoria (which we regard as the type-site); at Zimbabwe, where Caton-Thompson termed it "Class A"; at Dhlo-Dhlo, at Bambata Cave, in Gulubahwe Cave and Madiliyanga rock shelter, all in the Motopo; in the Salisbury district; at the Golden Shower workings, at Arcturus; at Macardon Claims, West Nicholson; at Mount Alice, Essexvale; at Que-Que; at Parma Kopje and Mapungubwe; at Happy Rest School near Louis Trichardt; at Maonza Cave in the Vumba Mountains, near Umtali, at Old Umtali, and doubtfully at the Places of Offering, Niekerk. Thus, from known examples we can state that this ware was used, at one time or another, over a territory measuring 400 miles (650 km) from north to south, and 300 miles (480 km) from east to west, and as yet the archaeological exploration of the country has hardly commenced.

There are, of course, many variations in the details of the wares from different parts of this great stretch of country. These, when they appear to be sufficiently distinctive, we propose to designate by the initial letter of the name of the site from which they were first recorded, in addition to their Class symbol.

*A Description of Class R<sub>1</sub> Pottery.*

We have adopted the Tunnel Site at Gokomere as the type-site for this class of pottery, because it was excavated by a trained prehistorian, Father T. Gardner, S.J.; because a great range of vessels were discovered, and also because the accumulation of the midden in which it occurred commenced directly after the Stone Age occupation and proceeded right up to modern times, for in the upper layers beads were found that only came into circulation in this area after the commence-

ment of last century. Therefore we can regard the site as being an epitome of the Bantu occupation of the country.<sup>14</sup>

The clay used naturally varies from site to site, but in general it is very coarse, with large included fragments, with the result that the pot walls are consistently thick, 10 to 15 mm being in no way exceptional. There is, however, considerable variation in the thickness of the wall of a single pot at different points, nor is the average thickness less in small than in large vessels. It is probable that the ware was baked on an open fire, for the degree of firing was sufficient to effect the cohesion of the particles only, and there is no trace of even partial fusion or of vitrification. A fresh fracture commonly shows a laminated structure, the external layers being better burnt than the core of the sherd.

The typical vessel of this class of pottery is a wide-mouthed pot with a carinated profile, and a vertical or slightly everted lip with a projecting rim-band, the latter formed by thinning out the wet clay, folding it downwards to the outside and trimming off the lower edge. The rim had a rounded or squarish section, or might be finished with a distinct ridge along its upper edge.

This complicated process was greatly simplified in common practice and the folded rim-band was replaced by a simple thickening of the rim, often accompanied by a characteristic hollowing on the interior aspect. Eventually these features also were abandoned, and the rim-band was represented by a zone of impressions made directly on the pot wall below the lip. The carination also tended to disappear on the more ordinary pots, although the decorative line or band, that invariably went with it, continued to be employed. When this, too, was no longer used, the shape of the pot itself generally shows something of its antecedents (pl. ii).

The carinated pot (pl. ii, 12) seems to have been the source from which all the other types of vessels, except the simplest forms of bowls, were derived. Thus the mouth was enlarged to form the deep bowls and basins; even when this process had

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<sup>14</sup> Gardner, T., Wells, L. H., and Schofield, J. F.: *The Recent Archaeology of Gokomere, Southern Rhodesia. Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVIII, pp. 219-253, 1940.

reached its logical conclusion (as in the case of a basin from Echo Farm, near Salisbury, in which the rim was horizontal), the decorated rim-band was retained in its traditional position (pl. ii, 7), although it could only be seen when the vessel was turned mouth downwards. Similarly the reduction in the height of the pot wall produced the shallow bowls (pl. ii, 8) and even the miniature pots or pipkins reflect very clearly the form of their larger originals (pl. ii, 16).

The principal method employed in decorating this ware was with stamped impressions. In the majority of cases this takes the form of a series of rectangular slots, probably produced by a comb or by a piece of gourd-rind in which notches had been cut at regular intervals. Individual impressions made with a circular or angular stylus were also used, and more rarely an irregular string of beads, a spirally wound wire bangle or a strand of twisted wire appear to have been employed. When incised ornament is used it is often in broad furrows, probably made by dragging a comb over the surface, or by scratching the pot with a blunt stick, but occasionally a blade or a point was used. In every recorded instance, all incisions were made on the wet clay.

With rare exceptions, the decoration of our vessels was confined to the rim-band, the neck, and the shoulder, or to corresponding parts of the pots. The rim-bands, when ornamented at all, always had a zone of diagonal impressions or incisions. On the other hand, the necks of many of the better finished pots were divided into well-defined bands or projecting ribs picked out with oblique incisions or impressions (pl. ii, 6) or similar motifs.

Since the formation of these ribs was a matter of some difficulty, and only the better-class vessels were so treated, it is probable that such were reserved for the use of persons of importance, and for this reason would be made in accordance with primitive traditions and practice. It is natural to suppose that, when pots for common use were required, they would, if decorated at all, be treated in a simplified manner. This is exactly what we do find, and such pots have merely lines of impressions instead of ribs, or their place may be taken by large chevrons or meanders.

Similarly, the persistence of primitive tradition seems to have been responsible for the persistence of the carinated profile. This feature undoubtedly had its origin as a structural process, such as a technique in which the bowl-like body and a conical upper portion were made separately and then joined together, a decorative band being used to cover the line of union.

We may conclude, therefore, that the ancestral form of our Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery had a carinated profile with decoration along the ridge, a well-marked rim-band, and the neck decorated with several slightly projecting ribs, enhanced with stamp-marks and/or incisions.

The surface treatment of the pottery varies with the type of clay used. At Gokomere a brown matt finish is the general rule, the interior and the lips of the bowls being burnished with black or with graphite. At Echo Farm some of the pottery had a soft crackled yellow to greenish surface, and at the Golden Shower Workings much of it seems to have been given a coat of some kind of black varnish.

#### *Varieties of Class R<sub>1</sub> Pottery.*

The self-sufficiency of most primitive communities, asking little of the outside world other than to be allowed to pursue their traditional ways in peace, and the general lack of communications, all tend to produce local loyalties and customs that leave their traces in their pottery.

#### *Gokomere.*

We may regard Gokomere as having been occupied by one of these isolated communities, a kind of backwater in fact that remained untroubled by the great events of the 17th and 18th centuries, where the womenfolk went on making the pottery according to the same models for generation after generation. But even at Gokomere fashions changed at last, and we find in the upper layers of the midden, pieces of pottery made in a buff burnished ware with the rim-band so reduced that it resembles a cylindrical roll (pl. iii, 1). The decoration of fine-comb impressions forms a zone round the neck, in a manner very similar to the wares of the Pedi people of the Central Transvaal. It was in the same layers as this pottery that the

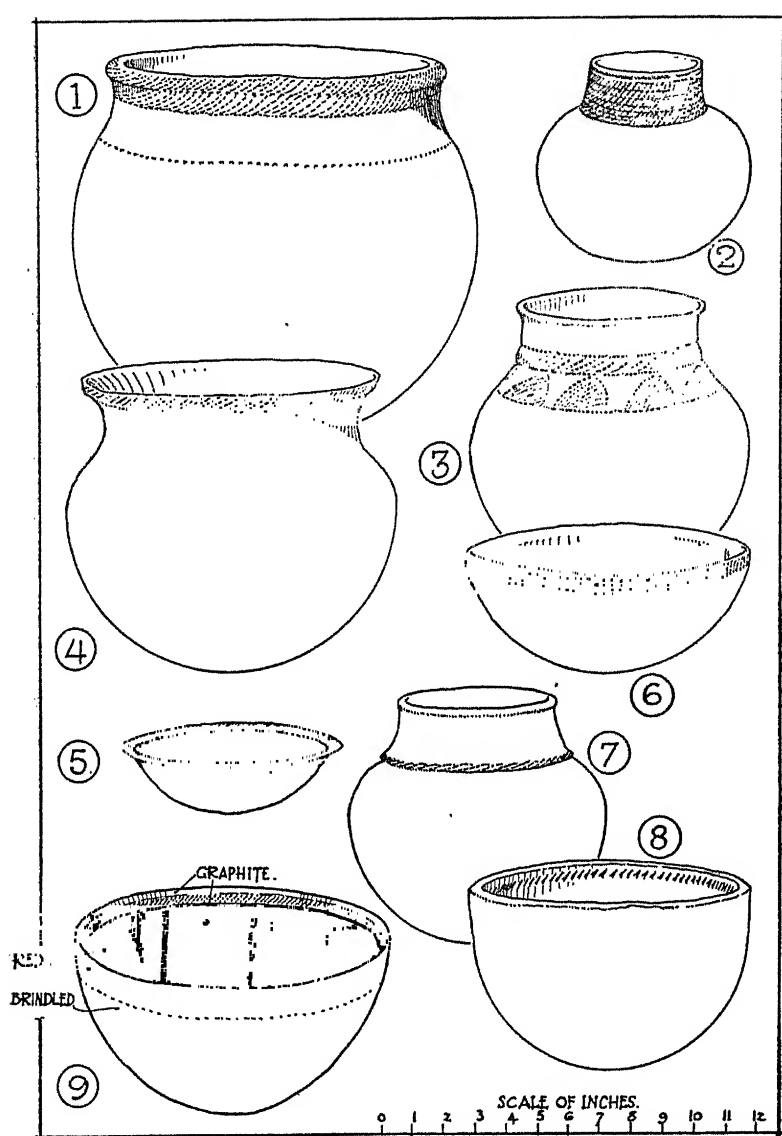


PLATE III.

## PLATE III.

## POTTERY TRADITIONS RELATED TO CLASS R.

1. A shouldered pot, 11 inches (28 cm.), over the rim, from the upper layers of the Tunnel Site, Gokomere. The neck and rim-band were decorated with a blade-like "comb" and the point marks with a square stylus. Class R<sub>1</sub>G.

2. A pot with a short conical neck, 3½ inches (9 cm.) over the rim and 6½ inches (16 cm.) in height. In a grey clay with brown matt surface. From Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.

3. Pot with a concave neck, 6 inches (15 cm.), over the rim. In a gritty grey clay with a smooth buff surface. From Hillside Site, Bulawayo. NMBYo.

4. Pot with a concave neck, 9½ inches (24 cm.), over the rim. In a brick red clay with a black varnished surface. From the Golden Shower Claims, Arcturus. Class R<sub>1</sub>G. QVMM.

5. A shallow bowl with a rim bevelled to the inside and decorated with comb impressions, 7 inches (18 cm.) over the rim. In fine brown clay, brindled matt internally and smoothed externally. From Touppe.

6. A deep bowl with the rim bevelled to the inside, 9 inches (23 cm.), over the rim. In a coarse reddish ware. The decoration was made with vertical impressions from a "comb" with four large rounded teeth. From the Golden Shower Claims, Arcturus. Class R<sub>1</sub>G. QVMM.

7. A pot with a concave neck, 5 inches (12.5 cm.) over the rim. In a grey clay with a reddish brown matt surface. The projecting neck-band was decorated with diagonal comb marks. From Touppe.

8. A deep bowl with a flattened rim, 9 inches (23 cm.) in diameter. In a coarse reddish clay with a graphite internally. There was a line of diagonal incisions below the rim internally. From the Golden Shower Claims, Arcturus. Class R<sub>1</sub>G. QVMM.

9. A deep bowl, 10 inches (25.5 cm.), over the rim and 5½ inches (14.5 cm.) in height. There was a band of diagonal comb marks below the rim internally. From Echo Farm, Salisbury. Class R<sub>1</sub>G. QVMM.

NOTE.—With the exception of Nos. 2 and 9, all these vessels have been reconstructed from fragments.

bangles of spirally wound copper wire and the beads of the late 18th or early 19th centuries were found (<sup>14</sup>p. 235).

*Happy Rest School, Louis Trichardt.*

The pottery that was discovered here some years ago has affinities with the later wares from Gokomere, and it may have a similar date, but in the absence of beads or any other dating material no definite statement can be made (<sup>15</sup>p. 312).

*Sinoia Cave Outspan and Leopard Kop, Khami.*

Numerous sherds and rim-sections have been found on both these sites that belong to a generalised Class R<sub>1</sub> tradition; in both cases it is associated with early 19th century-type beads, so the material must have a similar date to that of the second phase at Gokomere.

Thus we can see that as late as the beginning of last century this generalised phase of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery persisted over a very wide area. It is probable that it was related to another pottery tradition deriving from Class R<sub>2</sub>, but from the scanty materials available it is impossible to define its position more exactly. It is proposed to call this variation Class R<sub>1</sub>G.

*Salisbury Commonage Sites and Echo Farm.*

The importance of the very fragmentary sherds from the Salisbury Commonage Sites<sup>16</sup> lies in the relative chronology that their stratigraphy established for the much richer material from the graves on Echo Farm.

None of the pieces from the Salisbury Commonage can be matched from the Gokomere pottery; the shard from the lowest horizon has no projecting rim-band, the decoration being stamped and scraped directly on the pot wall, showing very clearly that a simplified technique is not necessarily a corollary of a late date. This piece, from its stratigraphy and its association with Wilton implements, must be of a respectable antiquity. There is, however, no doubt but that

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<sup>15</sup> de Vaal, J. B.: 'n Soutpansbergse Zimbabwe. 'n Voorlopige Ondersoek van 'n Bouval op die Plaas Solvent. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XL, pp. 303-318, 1943.

<sup>16</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Salisbury Commonage Sites, *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXIX, pp. 772-777, 1932.



it belongs to our Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery. The fragments of the bowls, with the decoration on the interior, came from the upper layers of the deposits, and form another interesting variation. At Echo their use appears to have continued until recent times, since one of them has its surface burnished in red and graphite, without any dividing line having been made on the pottery to separate the differently coloured areas—a feature we regard as a recent innovation (pl. iii, 9). All of the bowls are finished with a burnishing of red, brown, brindled buff and/or graphite, the latter being a practice that is again reminiscent of the wares of the Northern Transvaal.

At Echo there was a typical Class R<sub>1</sub> carinated pot and basin (pl. ii, 7 and 12), other wares that may be included in Class R<sub>1</sub>G (pl. iii, 9), and also a little pot with a slightly tapered neck—related by its decoration to Class R<sub>1</sub>, and by its form to Class R<sub>2</sub><sup>17</sup> (pl. iii, 2).

*Golden Shower Workings, Arcturus.*

All the pottery from this site comes from the material wherewith the "ancients" invariably masked the shafts of their disused gold mines. The pots have concave necks and everted lips—treated as though they were rim-bands with impressions of bangles, beads, or of the comb, but in a manner that is never found at Gokomere. The vestigial shoulder line is retained on most of the pots. None of them show a trace of the carinated profile, and only one of them has the neck decorated, with a crude meander scraped with a comb or a stick on the wet surface of the clay (pl. iii, 4).

The bowls have the wide internally and externally bevelled rims, frequently found on the Limpopo sites and at Touppe, but are certainly not characteristic of this class of pottery. Many of them have bold incisions below the rim internally, or comb impressions externally, similar to the bowls from Echo but in an exaggerated form (pl. iii, 6 and 8).

In addition to these vessels, a number of pottery *mbusa* (including images of animals, stylised human figurines,

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<sup>17</sup> Schofield, J. F., and Stapleton, P.: Pottery from the Salisbury District, Southern Rhodesia. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVI, pp. 321-340, 1938.

mushroom-shaped objects and rough discs, pierced in the centre) were found. Thus it is probable that the whole assemblage represents the remains of initiatory ceremonies. (pl. vi, 4, 5, 6, 8, 14.)

*The Place of Offerings, Niekerk.*

The material from Arcturus has much in common with the pottery from the Place of Offerings, as described and illustrated by MacIver in *Medieval Rhodesia*—

"The pottery is all made by hand, without wheel or lathe.

The clay is coarse, greyish earth, strengthened by the addition of powdered quartz, and the surface is left rough without slip or colouring. On the outside and at the rim, the pots are ornamented with geometric designs incised with the point while the clay was wet. These are executed in a bold, free style, and are usually of rectangular character, though there is one case of an excellent curved meander" (1p. 13, ppl. x and xi).

MacIver also mentions an animal-shaped vase with head and eyes represented by incised lines, and three small objects like the fingers of a hand (*ibid.*, pl. xii, 21, 22 and 23). From precisely similar finds on the Limpopo sites these can be definitely identified as stylised human figurines, and probably having a similar purpose to the *mbusa*, thus indicating that the Places of Offering were initiatory deposits.

The illustrations show a fine series of globular pots with concave necks and everted rims. The rims have bands of diagonal comb-impressions, and lines of similar impressions run round the neck-body junctions. The surface of the neck is in several instances covered with lines made by scraping with a comb. A fragment of a small bowl shows it to have had a rim with a wide interior bevel decorated with comb-impressions, forming small hatched triangles.

This pottery industry is really a borderline case, for although the decoration of the pottery has much in common with that of Class R<sub>1</sub> wares, yet the shape of the pots shows that they also derive from a pottery tradition (such as that of the Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery), in which the typical vessel was formed by the union of a globular bowl and a short vertical neck.

*Other Pottery Traditions related to the Class R<sub>1</sub> Wares.*

It is very unlikely that the complicated process by which the ancestral carinated pots of Class R<sub>1</sub> were made was evolved more than once in the comparatively restricted field of South or South Central Africa. Therefore we must regard all our pottery traditions in which the carinated profile occurs as having at least a common origin with Class R<sub>1</sub>.

At the present time carinated pottery is made by the Budga, the Tonga tribes of the Zambesi valley and Portuguese East Africa and the Tswana people of the Western Transvaal and Bechuanaland. Anciently such wares seem to have been made by a number of different communities, as indicated by the following list of their products:

- (i) A fine carinated pottery with vertical necks, finished with a graphite and red burnish and decorated with bands of herringbone incisions and complementary triangles. Pieces of this were taken at a depth of 6 feet (1.8 m) on Mapungubwe Hill (<sup>18</sup> xxxii, i). it is probably related to polychrome pottery from Zwartruggens in the Rustenburg District of the Western Transvaal,<sup>19</sup> and to polychrome pottery from the Rooiberg tin-workings, now in the Museum of the Archaeological Survey, Johannesburg. All of these were probably of old Hurutse origin (fig. iv, 3).
- (ii) Pottery from Bechuanaland, with a carinated profile and a convex rim-band below the rim, decorated with herringbone incisions and/or comb impressions.
- (iii) Polychrome pottery from Bechuanaland with a carinated profile and bands of lattice and herringbone incised decoration.
- (iv) Pottery with projecting rim-bands and vestigial shoulder bands, decorated with herringbone incisions. Known as an intrusive ware at Mapungubwe and from fragments from Serowe. Occasionally pieces show the carinated profile. The pot from

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<sup>18</sup> Fouche, L.: *Mapungubwe: Ancient Bantu Civilisation on the Limpopo*. The University Press. Cambridge, 1937.

<sup>19</sup> Harger, H. S.: *A Stone Bead Industry of the Western Transvaal*. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVIII, pp. 129-142, 1940.

Klein Letaba is probably a late relative of this group.<sup>20</sup> (fig. vi, 2.)

- (v) Pottery with a band of diagonal comb or other impressions below the lip or at the neck-body junction. The neck may be vertical, flared or everted. There is frequently a vestigial shoulder-band, and the pots are sometimes carinated. Examples have been found at Serowe, Touppe, Parma, Pont Drift and Bambandyanalo.

- (vi) The carinated pot from Renders Ruin, Zimbabwe (fig. iii, 1).

Notwithstanding the fact that all of these groups, with the exception of the last, fall within the scope of the material from Mapungubwe, where fully developed Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery was found throughout the deposits, it is probable that Groups iv and v at least may be derived directly from it. For Mapungubwe is a predominantly Class R<sub>2</sub> site, and was moreover on the periphery of the Shona sphere of influence. This alone would be indicative of a late date, and thus allow plenty of time for the development of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery and its subordinate wares.

Unfortunately we know nothing of the ancient pottery of the Botonga, but their modern representatives, both in the Zambesi Valley and in Portuguese East Africa, still make pots with a carinated profile and some of them also use the comb or stamp impressions in their decoration. So it may be that they carry on a tradition that goes back to the time before their ancestors and those of the Sotho tribes had parted company. But there can be no doubt that our Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery and its associated industries were ancestral (in part at least) to the wares made by the Sotho peoples to-day, notwithstanding the fact that they have adopted the practice of making their pots with flattened bases.

From all this it would appear that we are on firm ground when we attribute this pottery to the proto-Sotho peoples of Southern Rhodesia, whose occupation of the country followed the close of the Stone age, and in whom we may recognise the

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<sup>20</sup> Wells, L. H.: Remains from a Grave in Klein Letaba District. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 625-632, 1935.

subjects of the King of Butua, whose domain, according to the Portuguese writers of the 16th and 17th centuries, lay to the south<sup>21</sup> (ii, p. 418) and north-west of the Monomotapa,<sup>21</sup> (vii, p. 274), and above (i.e. to the west of) Manica and Maungo<sup>21</sup> (iii, p. 487). It is not without significance that all the pottery we have been discussing comes from precisely this region.

The table on page 210 gives a full account of the sources from which Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery have been obtained. A careful study of this table should give a more clear and comprehensive idea of the data at our disposal than is possible in a verbal description. The table also shows the types of implements, the age and material of beads and indicates the knowledge of iron, copper and gold which the makers of this class of pottery had achieved. In addition it will be noticed how at certain sites pottery figurines, spindle whorls and other recognisable objects are associated with this pottery. The fact that the pottery occurs frequently at depth and is not always surface material is important as it suggests more strongly that the associations are correct.

#### CLASS R<sub>2</sub> POTTERY.

The beauty of the pottery belonging to the period of Shona supremacy and the Empire of the Monomotapa has excited the admiration of everyone who has examined it. Bent remarked of a piece he found at Zimbabwe that it was "worthy of a good period of classic Greek ware", and Hall and Neal described a typical tall-necked pot from the M'Telegwa Ruins as "of the best Zimbabwe workmanship". It is unfortunate, therefore, that all our knowledge of this pottery is derived from places that are at a distance from its cultural centre in the Mazoe valley, and that this once densely-populated area is now a wilderness, with the ruins of the Monomotapa's strongholds crowning the hilltops and the remains of the Portuguese forts near the streams. Thus it follows that all our information regarding this ware is of a tentative nature that awaits confirmation from the results of future exploration.

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<sup>21</sup> Theal, G. M.: Records of South-Eastern Africa. Vols. II, III and VII. Clowes. London, 1898-1901.

*A Description of Class R<sub>2</sub> Pottery.**Its Distribution.*

Doubtless, for the reasons given above, the sites from which this pottery has been recorded are few and far between. They include Mapungubwe, which we regard as the type site; Riet and Sibsbey (the first 30 miles to the south, and the second 15 miles to the west of Messina); Zimbabwe; Matendere, where Caton-Thompson found one piece of her Class B pottery; Irene Mine, near the Bulawayo-Plumtree road, one piece only was found; Chiwona; M'Telcgwa and Maonza Cave, where a few pieces were found. Of these places Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe have been systematically excavated, while at Matendere and Chiwona a little digging only has been done; for the rest we must thank the domestic activities of antbears and springhares, or the chance discovery of surface finds.

*The Clay, the Burning, and the Surface Finish.*

The clay for this pottery was generally selected with greater care than was the case with Class R<sub>1</sub> wares, with the result that the pot walls are decidedly thinner. It is evident that a black or dark grey pottery was greatly admired; this was frequently achieved by under-burning, thus producing a laminated and friable fabric that easily disintegrates. Buff and honey-coloured wares were also produced, but not to anything like the same extent.

It was usual to finish both the common and the better class vessels with a fine matt surface, but many of the latter have a brilliant black burnish that is found on no other type of pottery, and was probably produced by the use of soot. Polishing with graphite was seldom practised, for at Mapungubwe only one piece was found that had been treated in this manner. The matt and burnished surface finish was also used on the buff and honey-coloured pottery. No examples have been recorded of the use of contrasted colours, although at Mapungubwe the wares of neighbouring peoples, coloured red, yellow and black, had been known from the earliest period of the occupation (fig. iv, 1 and 3).

*Design and Forms of Vessels Used.*

The typical vessel of Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery was formed by the union of a spheroidal bowl (pl. iv, 2 and 13) and a more or less vertical neck. Each component was made separately and the traces of the process of welding them together can often be seen on the interior of the pots (pl. iv, 10, 16 and 18). Externally the line of the junction was masked with incised decoration. We do not suggest that this process was invariably followed, but that from it a multitude of pots derived their form.

The homogeneity of this class of pottery is very clearly demonstrated by the manner in which this typical pot and its subordinate bowl are modified in the formation of the other vessels. Thus its mouth (which may measure anything from three inches to a foot (7.5-30.5 cm) in diameter over the rim) is expanded until its diameter equals that of the body, and so gives rise to the beaker-bowl (pl. iv, 14); or its walls may be reduced in height to form the shallow bowl (pl. iv, 5) or platter, while all the intervening steps between these extremes are duly represented.

The deep bowls, on the other hand, are derived from the spheroidal bowl with its mouth similarly enlarged until its rim is vertical, when the triangles that decorated its lip are usually represented in their appropriate place (pl. iv, 8).

These spheroidal bowls often have depressed rims (pl. iv, 2) and this feature also is sometimes represented in the necked pots, with the result that the neck looks as though it had sunk into the body of the pot. The rims are finished in a number of ways: simply rounded, cut square, or have a bold roll which is sometimes considerably undercut. More rarely the bowls have the rim formed with a wide bevel to the outside (fig. i, 5).

*Decoration.*

All decorative motifs were made with incisions on the wet clay, and almost invariably consist of repetitions of the diagonally hatched triangle, either singly, or formed into bands and put round the neck-body junction of the pots or the rims of the bowls. Occasionally a lozenge or small rectangle is placed between the points of the triangles. More

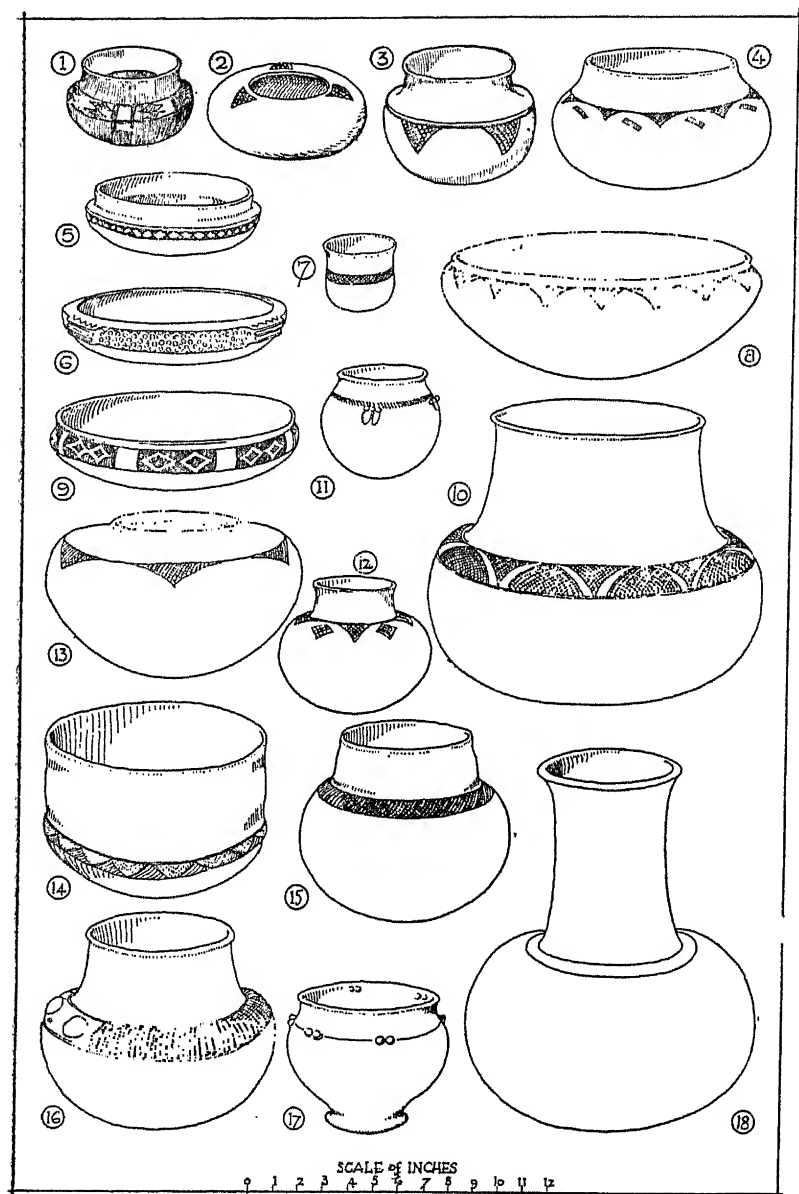


PLATE IV.



## PLATE IV.

## CLASS R, POTTERY.

1. A small pot with a conical neck, finished with a brilliant black burnish. From Mapungubwe. TM.
2. A small spheroidal bowl in a burnished grey clay. From Mapungubwe. PU.
3. A carinated bowl in a grey clay with a black burnish. From Mapungubwe. PU.
4. A shouldered bowl in a grey clay with a black burnish to the exterior and the inside of the rim. From the surface, Mapungubwe Grave Area. PU.
5. A shallow bowl in a grey clay with a black burnish. From Mapungubwe. PU.
6. A shallow bowl in a red clay with a red burnish. From grave No. 11, Mapungubwe. TM.
7. A small beaker. From Zimbabwe. WUMS.
8. A deep bowl in a grey clay with a matt surface. From Mapungubwe. PU.
9. A shallow bowl in a fine grey clay with a brilliant burnish. From Mapungubwe. PU.
10. A pot with a tall conical neck in a burnished grey clay. From the surface, Mapungubwe Grave Area. PU.
11. A small shouldered pot in a grey clay with a black burnish. Below the neck-band there are three motifs, spaced equidistantly, each formed with two shallow grooves with three pellets at the junction with the band. From the Cave Site, Gokomere.
12. A pot with a vertical neck and a spheroidal body in a grey clay with a black burnish to the exterior and the inside of the neck. From the Grave Area, Mapungubwe. PU.
13. A spheroidal bowl in a grey clay with a matt surface. From Mapungubwe. PU.
14. A beaker bowl in a black burnished clay. From a depth of 4 feet (1.22 m.) at wall No. 3 of the Hutting Area to the south of Mapungubwe Hill. PU.
15. A pot with a conical neck from Zimbabwe. WUMS.
16. A pot with a conical neck in a grey clay with a brindled matt surface. In a panel on the shoulder are a pair of breast-like discs. From Mapungubwe. PU.
17. A shouldered pot with a pedestal base. In a fine buff clay with a graphite burnish. At the shoulder are five pairs of small conical bosses, and three pairs of similar bosses on the inner aspect of the rim. From Shisambhe Mine, Sinoia. After E. Goodall. Fig. II, 3, p. 39. Rhodesian Pots with Moulded Decorations. Nada, No. 23, 1946. QVMM.
18. A tall necked pot. After (7) pl. 4 and p. 313. From M<sup>c</sup>Telegwa Ruins.

rarely stippling with a triangular point and impressions from a square or a round stylus have been found (pl. iv, 6). In one instance an attempt to draw a buck was noted.

Important elements in the decoration are the bosses, usually in the form of breast-like projections placed in panels on the shoulders of the vessels. Similar projections have also been recorded on the inner aspect of the lip (pl. iv, 16 and 17). From the analogy of modern practices it is very probable that this form of decoration had reference to fertility and that the pots on which it appears were used for special purposes. Groups of pellets and elongated lugs have also been recorded on pots, and the latter are also found on the sides of shallow bowls (pl. iv, 6 and 11).

*Class R<sub>2</sub> Pottery from Mapungubwe correlated with that from Zimbabwe.*

Both Mapungubwe and Zimbabwe have been extensively excavated and the large quantities of pottery discovered have been adequately described, but classified differently at each place. As the pottery from widely separated sites is never identical, even when it belongs to the same Class, and as there is much to be gained from the study of such variations as exist, it is clear that a correlation of these rival classifications is eminently desirable for a proper understanding of our subject.

At Zimbabwe, Caton-Thompson discovered two types of wares related to our pottery. These she termed respectively Class B and Class B<sub>2</sub>, and described them thus:

*Class B.*—"It is of finer texture (i.e. than our Class R<sub>1</sub>), also hand-made, and the outer face is provided with black slip; the paste is fired a reddish grey. It is undecorated and the bevelled rim is slightly flared. This class of pottery is abundant in the post-cement strata on all sites and much of it has a bright metallic and very effective sheen, produced by a graphite polish" (6p. 25), and

*Class B<sub>2</sub>.*—Similar to Class B, but decorated with a narrow band of cross hatched incisions with suspended chevrons incised with diagonal lines (6p. 73).

Unfortunately the mere presence or absence of decoration does not provide sufficient grounds for the classification of

pottery, and there is good reason to believe that not only were pieces of the same pot classified separately as belonging to Class B and Class B<sub>2</sub>, but also the undecorated sherds of the polychrome pottery, called by Caton-Thompson Class D, have been included with Class B.

The stratigraphy of Class B pottery is also interesting. In the Maund Ruins only five sherds were found beneath the "cement" floor, all the remainder being found in the hut-mounds; but in Test A<sub>3</sub>, on the Acropolis, in a sealed midden deposit with a depth of 6 feet (1.8 m) and below a stone pavement 17 feet (5 m) beneath the surface, out of a total of 257 sherds, 235 were classified as B. This apparent anomaly is perhaps explained by the fact that the sealing of this deposit took place at a later date than the building of the Great West Wall of the Acropolis, to which (from the survival of the wooden lintels of its tunnel entrance until 1914) we do not ascribe any great antiquity.<sup>12</sup> It is very probable, therefore, that much of this pottery is also of a late date and belongs to our Class R<sub>3</sub>.

With these reservations, Caton-Thompson's Class B and B<sub>2</sub> pottery can be identified with our Class R<sub>2</sub> wares.

At Mapungubwe, Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery (or, as Schofield called it, M<sub>1</sub>) was found in relatively enormous quantities, while Caton-Thompson's Class D was entirely absent. It was therefore possible to gain a more comprehensive picture of its characteristics than was the case when the more limited material obtained at Zimbabwe was at our disposal.

Throughout the excavations on Mapungubwe Hill, R<sub>2</sub> pottery was found in conjunction with a very different type of ware that occurred in increasing quantities with the depth of the excavation. Thus, for the first foot (0.30 m) of the excavation, 91.5% of the pottery found belonged to Class R<sub>2</sub>, 4.8% belonged to this second type (provisionally called Class M<sub>2</sub>), and 3.7% was indefinite; but in the seventh foot (1.8-2.4 m) the proportions were respectively 33.7%, 51.7% and 14.6%.

The close association suggested by these figures indicates that the presence of the beaker-bowls at Mapungubwe, and their entire absence at Zimbabwe, were due to this propinquity.

Again, pottery lids have been frequently found at Zimbabwe, but never at Mapungubwe, although the shallow bowls decorated on the underside must have served the same purpose, and it is interesting to note that these bowls have not been recorded from Zimbabwe.

There is also a great similarity in most of the other traits of material culture of the two places. Judging from the little we know of the gold work at Zimbabwe, the beads, plating and tacks were identical with the richer material from Mapungubwe. Pottery spindle whorls are numerous on both sites. Images of cattle also occur on both; but the stylised female figurines marked with the tribal cicatrization that at Mapungubwe were made of pottery were at Zimbabwe made of soap-stone, and unfortunately mistaken by many people for phalli.

The iron tools are the same; the spirally wound copper, iron and bronze wire bangles are the same; but the necklets, made in a similar manner but with a diameter of 8 mm. and fastened with neat ferruled hooks are peculiar to Mapungubwe, as are the bone points and the large "garden-roller" beads; the smaller types of beads are very similar in both places. The soapstone carvings of bowls, birds, etc., belong exclusively to Zimbabwe, for nothing resembling them in that material has been found elsewhere.

#### OTHER POTTERY TRADITIONS RELATED TO THE R<sub>2</sub> WARES.

##### 1. *Caton-Thompson's Class C Pottery at Zimbabwe.*

This pottery is described as:

"A brown polished ware . . . decidedly thicker and coarser than B, . . . and the moulding of the lips is noticeably more pronounced. The clay, however, appears to be similar, and it seems clear that as the two types are associated, . . . the brown ware is no more than a contemporary fabric probably reserved for a different type of pot" (p. 31).

All this is true enough as far as it goes, but it is more probable that this ware originally belonged to a separate but related tradition that was characterised by a short vertical neck, an everted and often heavily rolled lip, and frequently

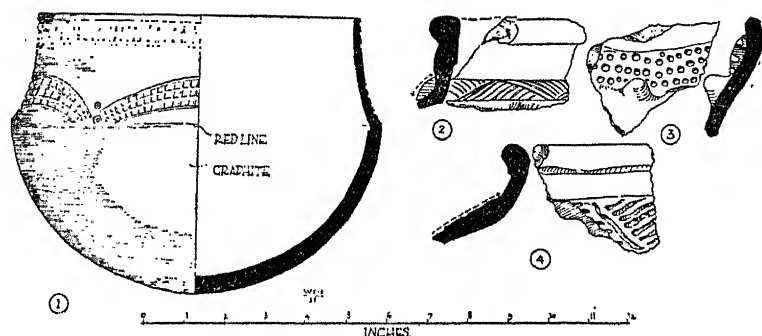


Figure iii

## POTTERY FROM ZIMBABWE.

1. Carinated bowl from Renders Ruin. Drawn by Mr. R. Summers. NMByo.
2. Fragment of a pot with a vertical neck, 10 inches (25.5 cm) over the rim. In a gritty clay with a smooth surface. The neck-band was planted on. From the Ridge Ruin. Class R<sub>2</sub>Z. QVMM.
3. Fragment of a pot with a short conical neck, 10 inches (25.5 cm) over the rim. In a gritty clay with a brown matt surface. From the Ridge Ruin. Class R<sub>2</sub>Z. QVMM.
4. Fragment of a large pot in a reddish clay. The neckband was planted on. From the Acropolis. Class R<sub>2</sub>Z. QVMM.

had a band of applied clay round the neck-body junction. This band, when present, was decorated in a variety of ways.—with a stippling of point impressions, sometimes worked into compartments or panels, and with various modifications of the hatched-triangle motif; triangles, too, were carried down on to the bodies of the larger pots. All the decoration was rendered in a free, bold style quite different from the more restrained and over-refined efforts of the R<sub>2</sub> artists. It would seem also that the surface of some of the larger pots was treated with a black varnish, the decorated areas being left the colour of the earthenware. These pots were of a considerable size, for specimens up to 18 inches (45 cm) in diameter have been found (fig. iii, 2, 3, and 4).

It is probable that this pottery is ancestral to the common pottery still used in the Northern Transvaal. It is characterised by a reddish buff clay finished with a matt surface, a spherical body with no neck, a rolled rim, and a band of roughly cut incisions about a couple of inches below the lip.

A few pieces of the older ware were found at Mapungubwe and we propose to use the symbol R<sub>2</sub>Z for it.

### 2. *The Ribbed Ware from Zimbabwe.*

Only six pieces of this pottery were found, and Caton-Thompson was probably correct in including it amongst her Class B wares under the symbol of B<sub>1</sub>. On the other hand, it has not the close relation she suggested with the little ribbed pot from the Indarama mine at Que-Que (pl. v, 2). It is more probable that the affinities of this pottery lie with the ribbed pots used by the Wemba people of Northern Rhodesia in their initiatory ceremonies, and it may be that the examples from Zimbabwe were used for a similar purpose (fig. v, 2). So little is known about this ware that the form of the pots cannot be decided; it is therefore impossible to attempt to classify it at present.

### 3. *Pottery from Touppe Kopje.*

The pottery from Touppe Kopje in Bechuanaland, described by Schofield as Category (a), may be related to Class R<sub>2</sub> wares.<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately this important site has never been excavated and our information regarding the pottery has been gleaned from a collection of fragments found on the surface. This pottery was a common domestic ware, frequently finished with a shade of red, brown or purple matt surface, which in many instances may have been burnished.

The types of vessels included deep bowls with broad bevelled rims decorated with comb impressions, large flat-based undecorated beakers (fig. iv, 2), and pots. These last represent every stage between the spherical bowl and the shouldered pot with a concave neck, varying greatly in size from 3 to 11 inches (7.5-2.8 cm) over the rim. The decoration, when present, consisted of a convex band of diagonal comb impressions round the neck of the vessel (pl. iii, 5 and 7).

Neither the beakers, the broad-rimmed bowls nor the comb impressions are elements of Class R<sub>2</sub>, and may have been acquired from the R<sub>1</sub> and NT<sub>1</sub> traditions of neighbouring people, but the shape of the pots is definitely related to the typical pot of Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery, as described above.

These pots and also the bowls have much in common with the pottery from the Place of Offerings, Niekerk, and the

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<sup>22</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Pottery from Bechuanaland and Rhodesia. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXX, pp. 1-16, 1943.

little pot with the short contracted neck from Echo. We may therefore be dealing with widely separated sites belonging to a pottery tradition of which we know very little at present. At Touppe also the cicatrised figurines and garden-roller beads, so characteristic of the Limpopo valley sites, have been found.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4. *Pottery from Hillside, Bulawayo.*

The pottery from this site is important because it furnishes us with links between Class R<sub>1</sub>G wares, Class R<sub>2</sub> wares and wares from Bambandyanalo on the Limpopo.

All the pottery found seems to have been made from the same gritty, greyish clay, that burnt (according to the degree of firing employed) to a buff, pinkish or blackish sandy surface. Most of the pieces were finished smooth with the hand, but the beakers had a dark brown matt surface that may have been burnished originally.

The types made included beakers or beaker-bowls, shouldered pots with more or less vertical necks, pots with concave necks and spherical pots (pl. vii, 1-5).

The beakers had a line of hatched triangles incised just below the rim, the shouldered pots had a band of rough incisions below the rim, chevrons or meanders, scraped with a blunt stick or comb, round the neck, or a band of comb impressions round the neck and a line of hatched triangles, also made with the comb, round the shoulder. The pots with concave necks were similarly decorated or had a band of comb impressions round the neck only.

The beakers and some of the shouldered pots are identical with similar vessels from Bambandyanalo and the pots with concave necks are very like those from Touppe and the typical pot of the Class R<sub>2</sub> wares. This applies more particularly to those with the triangles round the shoulder (pl. iii, 3), for a similar pattern, but made with incisions, comes from Zimbabwe.

Associated with this pottery were stylised figurines with cicatrization patterns, similar to those from Touppe and the Limpopo sites, also bean-shaped objects with notches on the curved edge (pl. vi, 1-3), and iron slag.

#### 4. *Pottery from Mount Alice, Essexvale.*

The pottery vessels from this site are so fragmentary that it is impossible to say whether they represent the successive occupation of the site by peoples who made Class R<sub>1</sub> and Class R<sub>2</sub> wares respectively, whether they are the result of a *mélange* of the classes, or are merely stray imports. This much is certain: representative pieces of both Classes have been found on the surface, as well as broad-rimmed bowls, cicatrised figurines, a pottery model of an ox and also garden-roller beads.<sup>23</sup>

#### *The Dating of Class R<sub>2</sub> Pottery.*

Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery at Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe is the earliest of our sites for which we have some direct historical evidence that helps us to fix their dates.

When Fernandes visited the Monomotapa in 1513-1514 he found him engaged in war with the King of Butua. This equally great sovereign lived at a distance of ten days' journey (that is, somewhere in the Enkeldoorn District). Some time later, between 1530 and 1538, Vincente Pagado, who was then captain of Sofala, was informed by Moorish merchants that Butua was tributary to the Monomotapa. This southward extension of the power of the Monomotapa brought about the Shona occupation of Zimbabwe and may well have resulted in the establishment of a Shona dynasty at Mapungubwe, for this could hardly have happened while Butua was an independent state.

The complete absence of the well-known polychrome band-and-panel wares of the Roswi period leads us to believe that the occupation of Mapungubwe ceased somewhere before 1750, probably as a result of the Venda invasion of the Northern Transvaal, but Zimbabwe was not abandoned until the Swazi invasion of about 1830.

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<sup>23</sup> Meyer, E. T.: A Study of some Pottery from Mount Alice, Essexvale District, S. Rhodesia. *Trans.Rhod.Sci.Assn.*, XXXVII, pp. 187-198, 1939.



CLASS R<sub>3</sub> POTTERY.

We owe our first description of Class R<sub>3</sub> pottery to MacIver, who said of the wares he found at Dhlo-Dhlo:

"The pottery of this site is peculiarly beautiful . . . it is all hand-made. . . . The colouring matters of the painted pottery are probably plumbago for black, and haematite for red" (11p. 49).

He also comments on the superiority of the clay to that of the Nickerk pottery.

That these wares are a legacy from the Roswi Mambos who succeeded Changamire during the 18th and early 19th centuries is established beyond any reasonable doubt by traditions still current in the early days of the Occupation, and by its occurrence at Dhlo-Dhlo and other of their principal sites.

*A Description of Class R<sub>3</sub> Pottery.*

The clay is generally fine, but varies a good deal in different localities and although the surface finishes used and the types of vessels made are very similar from one end of the country to the other, yet there are greater diversities in the pottery from any one site than we have encountered in the case of the other two Classes. Thus we find:

## 1. Undecorated wares—

- (a) Thick tough pottery with a black, red or reddish brown burnished surface. The principal type comprised spherical pots either with, or without vertical necks.
- (b) A thinner pottery than the last, sometimes with a reddish brown burnished finish, but more often it is either black or polished with graphite. Including bowls, pots with globular or spheroidal bodies and concave necks with everted rims.

## 2. Decorated wares—

- (a) With the decoration incised on the unburnt clay, usually in the form of a band of chevrons round the rim of the pots. The types and finish being similar to 1 (b) (pl. v, 4).

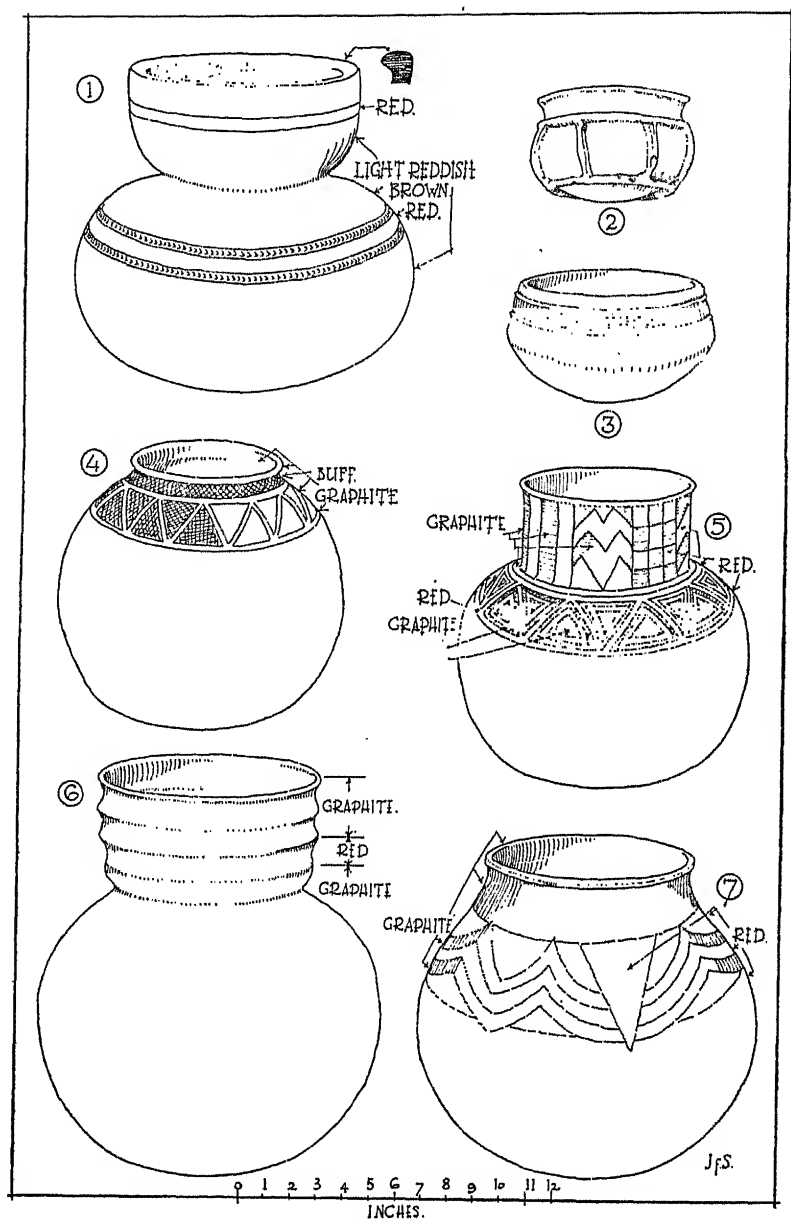


PLATE V.

## PLATE V.

## CLASS R. POTTERY.

1. A pot with a convex neck, 9 inches (23 cm.) over the rim, 12½ inches (32.5 cm.) in diameter with a height of 12 inches (30.5 cm.). From the Hill Ruin, Khami. From particulars supplied by Mr. K. R. Robinson. NMBYo.

2. Ribbed pot in a rough brown ware. The bands appear to have been applied to, and worked into the surface, with the exception of the upper one, which may have been worked up out of the pot wall. From an "ancient" working at the Indarama Mine, Que-Que. QVMM.

3. A bowl from Cyrene, near Bulawayo. From particulars supplied by Rev. E. Paterson. See text.

4. A globular pot. Reconstructed from fragments found at Dzata.

5. A globular pot with a vertical neck. Conjectural restoration from fragments from Khami. DM.

6. A globular pot with a fluted neck. Reconstructed from fragments from Khami. NGM.

7. A shouldered pot with engraved decoration. Reconstructed from fragments from Maryland, near Messina. PU.

- (b) With the decoration incised as last, but with bands (usually polished with graphite) forming panels that are filled in with stippling or hatching and the surface burnished with red, black, graphite, or left the self-colour of the clay. The vessels were most frequently shouldered pots, but all the other types of pottery seem to have been represented (pl. v, 5).
- (c) Similar pottery to the last, but the designs of the decoration were engraved after burning. The types include pots with vertical, convex (pl. v, 1) and fluted necks (pl. v, 6), also spherical and shouldered pots (pl. v, 7).

The lips of all five of these categories are most commonly simply rounded off, but they may be everted and undercut in a very characteristic manner, also the interior of the necks, more particularly those of the shouldered pots, was often reinforced with an added band of clay (fig. i, 6, 6 and 7).

It is clear that categories 1(a) and 1(b) were used for domestic purposes, and the others for more important occasions, but sherds of the undecorated wares are mixed in their respective middens with those of the decorated pottery. But far more fragments of the former are found than of all the others put together.

The engraved decoration has had its influence on the choice of the patterns used, so we find rectilinear motifs predominating, with large chevrons, horizontal and vertical bands alternating with herringbone or cross hatching with the lines so widely spaced that it resembles a lattice (pl. v, 5). The incised designs show greater freedom, for stippling was often used and MacIver illustrated two rough attempts at the *guilloche* he found at Khami (<sup>11</sup>pl. xxxv, 23 and 32).

### *Distribution.*

The distribution of these categories is also of interest. 1(a) has been recognised only at Dhlo-Dhlo, where the perfectly preserved pots found by Caton-Thompson belong to it. As it was associated with an 18th century glass bottle and a Ming bowl of the same period, its date is more clearly established than that of any other of our ancient wares. It also

forms the vast majority of all the shards that at present strew that site (<sup>6</sup>pp. 171-177).

Category 1(b) is very plentiful at Khami and on the old Vanda sites generally. At the Tegwani River Ruin, near Plumtree, it has been found without the coloured band and panel pottery that usually accompanies it.

Pottery of the other three categories has been found on all the recorded Roswi sites in Southern Rhodesia and also on the old Venda sites of the Northern Transvaal. The first include Dhlo-Dhlo, Regina, Nanatali, Khami and Zimbabwe (where Caton-Thompson called it Class D), while a few shards have been picked up at Nickerk. The Venda sites include Dzata, Verdun, Maryland, Haddon and Machemma. In all these places (with the exception of Zimbabwe and Nickerk) Class R<sub>3</sub> and its related wares account for almost all the pottery found.

No attempt can be made at present to decide whether these categories represent different strands in a complex tradition, or the weaving together of different traditions, for the pottery from none of the more opulent centres has as yet been studied in detail. Even at Dhlo-Dhlo the work done, both by MacIver and by Caton-Thompson, had as its object the establishment of the date of the building rather than the elucidation of the problems of its occupation.

The distribution we have outlined above indicates again the complexities of our problems. As at Mapungubwe, we find the intimate association of two categories at Khami, and (with a change of partners) at Dhlo-Dhlo also. At Khami the position was still further complicated by neighbouring communities who were still making their pottery on models that have their precedents in the Class R<sub>1</sub> and its kindred wares (pl. vii, 1-5).

#### OTHER POTTERY TRADITIONS RELATED TO THE CLASS R<sub>3</sub> WARES.

##### 1. *Pottery from the Pit-Circles.*

Pottery recovered from the excavation of crude stone structures and of a Pit-Circle at Penhalonga has been described by

Mason (<sup>24</sup>pp. 574-78). The vessels consisted of shouldered pots and bowls. These and similar wares from neighbouring sites were finished with a grey, brown, honey-colour matt or a graphite surface. Only one piece had a band of triangular point marks round the shoulder. This pottery offers a striking parallel to our first category, not only in the types of vessels, surface finish and lack of decoration, but also in the undercutting of the lips (fig. i, 6, 6) and the internal reinforcement of the necks of some of the pieces (fig i, 6-7). This is an interesting matter, for, as we have already seen, representative pieces of all kinds of the Pit-Circle pottery have been found associated with Wilton material in the nearby Nyazongo rock shelter.

2. *The Modern Pottery of Southern Rhodesia and Vendaland.*

The main stem of modern Venda pottery derives directly from Class R<sub>3</sub> wares, and, as will be shown later, the same applies to much of the current pottery of Southern Rhodesia.

THE UNCLASSIFIED POTTERY OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA.

In addition to our three principal classes there are four other pottery industries known from Southern Rhodesia that at present cannot be connected with any known wares.

1. *The Bambata Pottery.*—This pottery has already been described.<sup>24</sup> It is only necessary to add that the decoration of some of the pieces from Gokomere shows a certain amount of resemblance to that of the Bambata pottery (see fig. ii, 1 and 5).

2. *Pottery from the Indarama Mine, Que-Que.* The little pot from Que-Que has two large rings of applied clay, one below the neck and the other round the base, with four similar pieces linking them together at equal intervals. It is quite distinct from the ribbed ware from Zimbabwe, but recently parts of similar pots have been reported from Niekerk (pl. v, 2).

3. *Pottery from Cyrene Mission, Bulawayo.* Considerable fragments of a bowl, about 7 inches (18cm) over the rim, in a black ware have been found at the Cyrene Mission. The

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<sup>24</sup> Mason, A. Y.: The Penhalonga Ruins, Southern Rhodesia. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXX, pp. 559-581, 1933.

upper part of the bowl is canted inwards and gives it a sub-carinated contour. The rim is rounded and slightly convex to the outside, below it there is a band, about an inch (2.5cm) in width, formed with two narrow projecting rolls, the space between them being covered with the impressions made by sea-sawing a chisel-edged stylus down it in vertical columns, each about a third of an inch (8mm) in width. Laidler has illustrated sherds from exactly similar bowls from Khami (<sup>25</sup>pl. xv, 6), now in the Kissack Collection in the Albany Museum (pl. v, 3).

This pottery may be derived from some of the more ornate Class R<sub>1</sub> bowls at Gokomere, or it may have been imported from the North.

4. *Carinated Bowl from Render's Ruin, Zimbabwe.* MacIver has illustrated (<sup>11</sup>pl. xxxv, 1), a carinated bowl with a rim-band formed by three horizontal cross-hatched incisions. On the neck were four inverted festoons in similar cross-hatching, and between each of them was a motif consisting of two small circles, one over the other. It was burnt to a yellowish brown externally, the upper part had a slight burnish and the lower a graphite polish. Red colour was used on the carination. No other example of this ware has been recorded (fig. iii, 1).

*Other Pottery Objects from Southern Rhodesia.*

In olden times earthenware was not only used for the making of domestic utensils, but for a number of other objects, of which the principal were as follows.

1. *The Pottery Birds from Vukwe.*

Frobenius unearthed two pottery birds and the fragments of a third from the base of the wall of the Vukwe Ruin in the Tati Reserve (<sup>26</sup> pl. L). The birds were about the size of doves. Judging from the position in which they were found and from the socket hole in the ventral aspect of each of them, it is very probable that they originally stood on poles along

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<sup>25</sup> Laidler, P. W.: South African Native Ceramics: Their Characteristics and Classification. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVI, pp. 93-172, 1938.

<sup>26</sup> Frobenius, L.: *Erythräa*. Berlin, 1932.

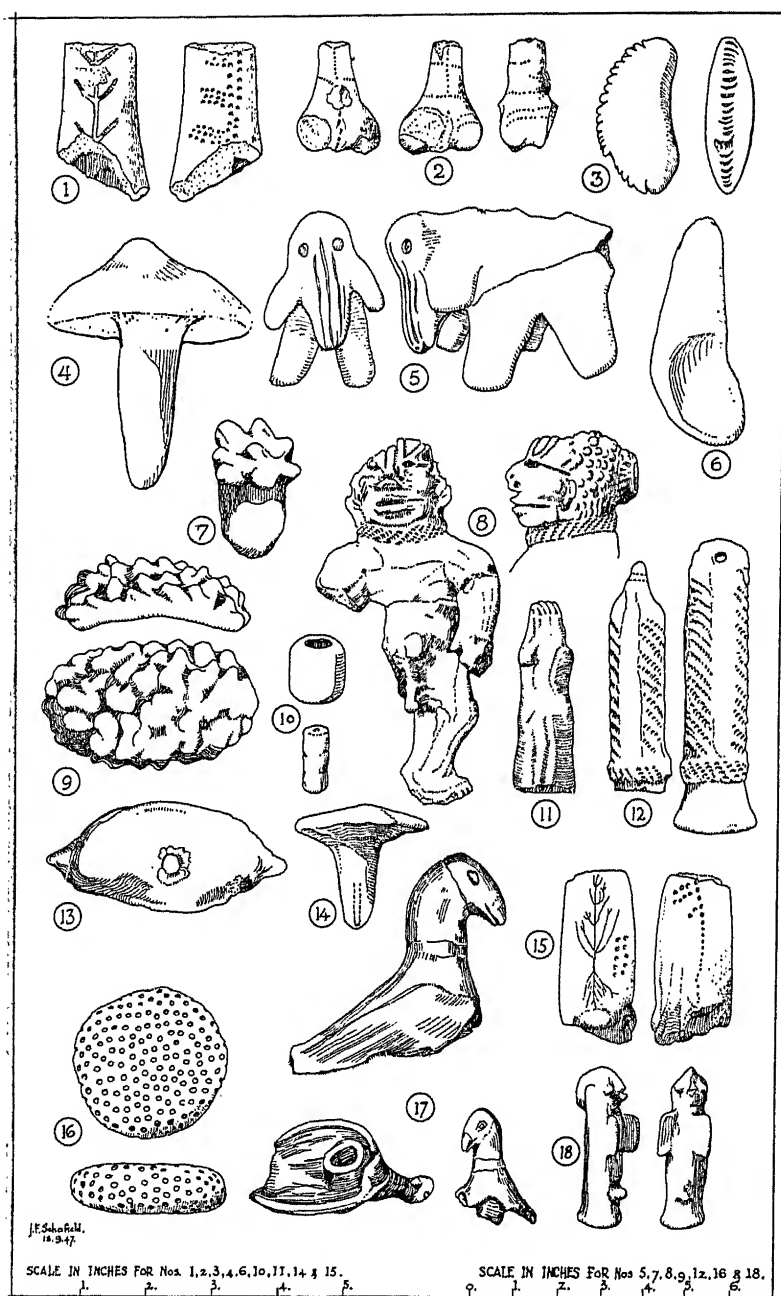


PLATE VI.



## PLATE VI.

## OTHER POTTERY OBJECTS FROM SOUTHERN RHODESIA.

1. Figurine, in a black clay with a brown surface, showing both frontal and dorsal cicatrization. From Hillside Site, Bulawayo. NMByo.

2. As last, but with a dark grey surface. Similar to a figurine from Mapungubwe. NMByo.

3. Bean-shaped object from the same site. The material is similar to No. 1.

4. Mushroom-shaped object, in rough red clay. From drawing by Mrs. E. Goodall. From the Golden Shower Claims, Areturus. QVMM.

5. A pottery elephant, in a reddish burnt clay. It was probably found in a drive, 20 feet (6.09 m.) below the surface at the Golden Shower Claims. From a drawing by Mrs. E. Goodall. QVMM.

6. A pottery spoon in a red clay. As last. Similar spoons were found on the Limpopo Sites. QVMM.

7. A mamillated object, resembling the Mutsuku, or sacred copper ingot of the Venda. Found with about 140 other pottery images near the Three Skids Claims. Near the junction of the Umfurudzi and Mazoe Rivers. From a photograph supplied by Dr. J. Hewitt. QVMM.

8. A naturalistic male figurine. The left hand appears to have held a stick-like object. Otherwise as No. 7. QVMM.

9. Two mamillated objects from the same site as No. 7.

10. Pottery mould for large glass "Garden-roller" beads and perforated cylinder of pottery, probably used to compress the molten glass in the mould. Both from Bambandyanalo. PU.

11. A cast of a pottery figurine from the surface of Touppe kopje. AS.

12. Two stylised female figurines from the Umfurudzi Site. The skirt with a bead belt is indicated, the cicatrization—by impressions of a string of beads on the sides and the mouth by the hole at the apex. QVMM.

13. A spoon-shaped object with a perforated bowl. From the Umfurudzi Site. QVMM.

14. A mushroom-shaped object with a longitudinal perforation in the stem. From the Golden Shower Claims. From a drawing by Mrs. E. Goodall. QVMM.

15. Cast of a torso of a figurine from Mukwine Hill, 20 miles (31.5 k.) south of Serowe. AS.

16. Bun-shaped object, with numerous impressions from a circular stylus. A surface find near Salisbury. From the collection in S. George's College, Salisbury. From a drawing by Mrs. E. Goodall.

17. The pottery birds from Vukwe. From drawings by Mrs. E. Goodall. See Plate L, Eryträa. By L. Frobenius.

18. A stylised figurine from the Umfurudzi Site. QVMM.

the crest of the wall, they therefore afford a close parallel to the Zimbabwe birds, not only in their use and appearance (which is very striking), but also in age, for since they are in the well-known black and red pottery of Class R<sub>3</sub>, it is unlikely that their age exceeds two and a half centuries, while it may be considerably less (pl. vi, 17).

## 2. *Spindle Whorls.*

The little perforated discs, made from pieces of broken pottery, have been recorded from many ancient sites in Southern Rhodesia, but they do not appear to have been used to the south of the Zoutpansberg Mountains. So far as we can gather from their stratigraphy and from any traces of decoration they may retain, they are always associated with Class R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> pottery or the related wares. At Gokomere, the type site for Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery, none at all were found, and at Parma there were none in the sealed deposit beneath the floor of Rock Shelter No. 1, although they were plentiful enough in the debris of the later occupations. At Mapungubwe the distribution is very instructive. Several score were taken on the Hill, nearly half of them from the uppermost foot (30 cm) of the deposits, but thereafter the numbers diminished rapidly, until in the seventh foot (1.8-2.1 m) only two were found. On the neighbouring site of Bambandyanalo there were none at all.

The presence of these whorls implies the spinning of yarn, and that again implies the weaving of cloth. This handicraft was well known in the Zambesi valley at least as far back as the beginning of the 16th century, for Fernandes mentions the making of cloth in the Kingdom of Moziba, and its export to the Monomotapa. There are a number of other references to the art in the later Portuguese writers, and its practice is not yet quite extinct in these areas.

In earlier times the use of cotton cloth seems to have been an insignia of royalty, for we are told that, before the Venda left their ancient city of Matongoni, Mwali called his son Tahulme to him and invested him with shining white cotton

garments and beautiful *madi* and *denga* beads (<sup>27</sup>p. 16). Some such association may account for the restricted distribution noted at Mapungubwe.

The incidence of these spindle whorls indicates that the arts of spinning, and probably of weaving also were introduced during the Shona period, and that before the beginning of the Roswi period they had spread into the Northern Transvaal, where they subsequently fell into disuse.

## 2. Pottery Figurines.

Stylised human figurines have been reported from many sites (for example, by MacIver from the Place of Offerings at Niekerk), but their true significance was not understood until the discovery of large numbers of them on the Limpopo sites, and the publication of an account of the *Mbusa* or pottery images, used in the initiatory ceremonies of the Wemba of Northern Rhodesia,<sup>28</sup> provided us with comparative material that has placed their true nature beyond all doubt.<sup>28</sup> It is now possible to see their relationship to the wooden images used by many Bantu tribes in these ceremonies, and also with the soapstone figurines from Umtali and Zimbabwe. As many of these figurines carry the tribal cicatrization patterns of their makers, it is likely that they will prove to be of considerable ethnological interest (pl. vi, 1, 2, 11, 15 and 18).

In addition to the instances already mentioned, a number of naturalistic male and stylised female figurines have been found near the junction of the Mazoe and the Umfurudzi Rivers. These have been decorated with impressions made by a string of small beads, and are therefore probably the work of Class R<sub>1</sub> potters, or those of one of the related traditions (pl. vi, 8 and 12).

Figurines marked with comb impressions, and thus related to similar pottery traditions, have been found in the neighbour-

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<sup>27</sup> van Warmelo, N. J.: The Copper Miners of Musina and the Early History of the Zoutpansberg. VIII, *Ethnological Publications*, Department of Native Affairs. Government Printer. Pretoria, 1940.

<sup>28</sup> Richards, A. I.: Pottery Images or *Mbusa* used at the Chisungu Ceremony of the Bemba People of North-Eastern Rhodesia. *S.Afr. Journ.Sci.*, XLI, pp. 444-458, 1944.

hood of the Jumbo Mine. Like the analogous *Mbusa*, these figurines are often accompanied by models of cattle and other animals (pl. vi, 5), pottery spoons, and enigmatical objects that may provide valuable clues in establishing the relationships of the various groups of images (pl. vi, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14 and 16).

### 3. *Bead-Moulds and Perforated Cylinders.*

The little moulds used in the manufacture of the large "garden-roller" beads are the finest examples of the work of the primitive potters yet found in South Africa. These beads were made by melting down the small imported beads, winding up an oat-shaped mass of viscous glass on a wire, passing the mould over it, and then, with a pottery cylinder in either hand, compressing the glass until it completely filled the mould (pl. vi, 10).

Pottery bead-moulds and the cylinders that were used with them have so far been found on only three sites: Mapunbugwe and Bambandyanalo on the Limpopo, Mount Alice near Essexvale in Matabeleland, and Touppe in Bechuanaland.

### III.

## THE ANCIENT POTTERY OF THE BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE.

In olden days the territory of the Bechuanaland Protectorate supported a large and thriving population who have left many sites covered with great masses of debris as witnesses of the length of their occupation and the variety of their industries. Laidler visited Serowe, Dithebyane near Molepolole, Lotsani at the Junction of the Lotsani and Limpopo Rivers, Maokagane and Modaepae near Mochudi, collected some pottery and in addition did a little excavation at the first two (<sup>1</sup>pp. 129-32). A collection of pottery from the surface of Touppe Kopje and Losè<sup>2</sup> was made by Mr. V. Ellenberger, the District Commissioner at Serowe, but beyond

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<sup>1</sup> Laidler, P. W.: South African Native Ceramics: Their Characteristics and Classification. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVI, pp. 93-172, 1938.

[As the title suggests, Laidler sets out to review all the indigenous pottery of South Africa. He divided his field primarily into Early, Middle and Late African, and then into 26 types. Early African is identified with Caton-Thompson's Class A, and thus with our Class R<sub>1</sub>. From it Laidler derived both Hottentot and Bantu pottery, Late African includes modern Bantu wares. The decoration used on this pottery is classified under 111 motifs.

The whole work suffers from repetitiveness and confusion, the latter being its worst defect, for Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery from Natal is referred to Southern Rhodesia, where it is classed as Early African, and to East London, where it is called Late African. The present whereabouts of pottery described or illustrated is indicated by the use of capital letters in brackets, but there is no key provided to the significance of these symbols. Similar carelessness pervades the whole work. It is illustrated by a number of indifferent line drawings and by eight photographic plates. In no instance is a scale provided to any illustration.]

<sup>2</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Pottery from Bechuanaland and Rhodesia. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXX, pp. 1-16, 1943.

these wholly inadequate sources of information little is known of any of these sites, for as yet none of them has been properly explored. In such circumstances any classification of the pottery must be of an entirely provisional character as it is based on typology instead of stratigraphy. Thus we can recognise four classes of pottery and we propose to use the symbols BP<sub>1</sub>, BP<sub>2</sub>, BP<sub>3</sub> and BP<sub>4</sub> for them respectively.

#### *Class BP<sub>1</sub>.*

The pottery of this class includes the wares we have already discussed under Group v of Class R<sub>1</sub> and seems to have been typical of Dithebyane, where the vertically-sided pot with a heavily projecting convex rim-band and diagonal comb marks occurs. This is similar to pottery found at Inyati in Southern Rhodesia. Another variety of this ware, but with a flat rim-band, came from Touppe, and others from Serowe, Parma, Pont Drift, and Bambandyanalo. This class of pottery was finished with a matt surface, and as far as is known contrasted colouring was not used.

Maokagane is the most important site known for this class of pottery. It was occupied (according to local tradition) by a branch of the Kwená, who subsequently established themselves at Serowe as the Ngwato. The pottery so far recovered seems to have belonged mainly to two categories; one of them can be included in Class BP<sub>3</sub>, but the other has much in common with Class R<sub>1</sub> or R<sub>1</sub>G (fig. iv, g) and also exhibits every stage in the progressive simplification of the rim-band that found its final expression in the notched rim (*ibid* 10-17) and thus provided us with one of the diagnostic traits of Class ST<sub>2</sub> and NC<sub>2</sub> pottery that is also seen in the modern wares of the Thembu.

Another feature of the sherds from this site is the flattening of the upper surface of the rim, probably caused by the practice of standing the unbaked vessels, mouth downwards, to dry. This feature also reappears in the wares from the Natal Coast (pl. viii, 13, 14 and 16).

#### *Class BP<sub>2</sub> Pottery.*

The pottery of this class includes Schofield's Category (a) wares from Touppe which we have already shown to be

related to Class R<sub>2</sub> wares (p. 110). Coloured surface finish was in red, brown and purple are much in evidence. Pots with vertical sides form an important element in the general assemblage (fig. iv, 2).

*Class BP<sub>3</sub> Pottery.*

This pottery includes that of Category (b) from Touppe and similar vessels from Maokagane. The class is characterized by the use of beakers, beaker-bowls, sometimes with a slightly carinated contour, and 7 to 9 inches (18-23cm) over the rim; by spherical pots, and by the free use of colour contrasts in buff, red, and black, finished with a matt or burnished surface. The pots were decorated with bands and lines of comb impressions; these frequently ran obliquely up the side of a vessel and served as boundaries for the differently coloured areas.

With this class we also include the beaker-shaped vessels, with vertical or slightly carinated sides, decorated with incised bands of lattice and herringbone, and finished in contrasting colours, which we have included in Group iii, of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery.

It is also probably related to the intrusive Class M<sub>3</sub>b pottery at Mapungunwe (<sup>3</sup>p. 39 and pl. xxxii, 2), characterised by the contrasted buff colour of the wedge-shaped areas of herringbone incisions and the purple burnish of the remainder of the vessel (fig. iv, 1). One such bowl has a pair of small bosses just below the rim, similar to an example from Maokagane.

*Class BP<sub>4</sub> Pottery.*

This is the Category (c) pottery from Touppe. It is a very coarse ware, large shouldered pots being the only type of vessel recognised. Its distinguishing features are the use of coloured surface finishes, usually dull red and graphite, (the coloured areas being divided by roughly incised lines) and the use of stippling. It appears to be comparatively modern, and may be nothing more than an intrusion of one of the contemporary pottery industries of Southern Rhodesia.

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<sup>3</sup> Fouche, L.: *Mapungubwe: Ancient Bantu Civilisation on the Limpopo*. University Press. Cambridge, 1937.

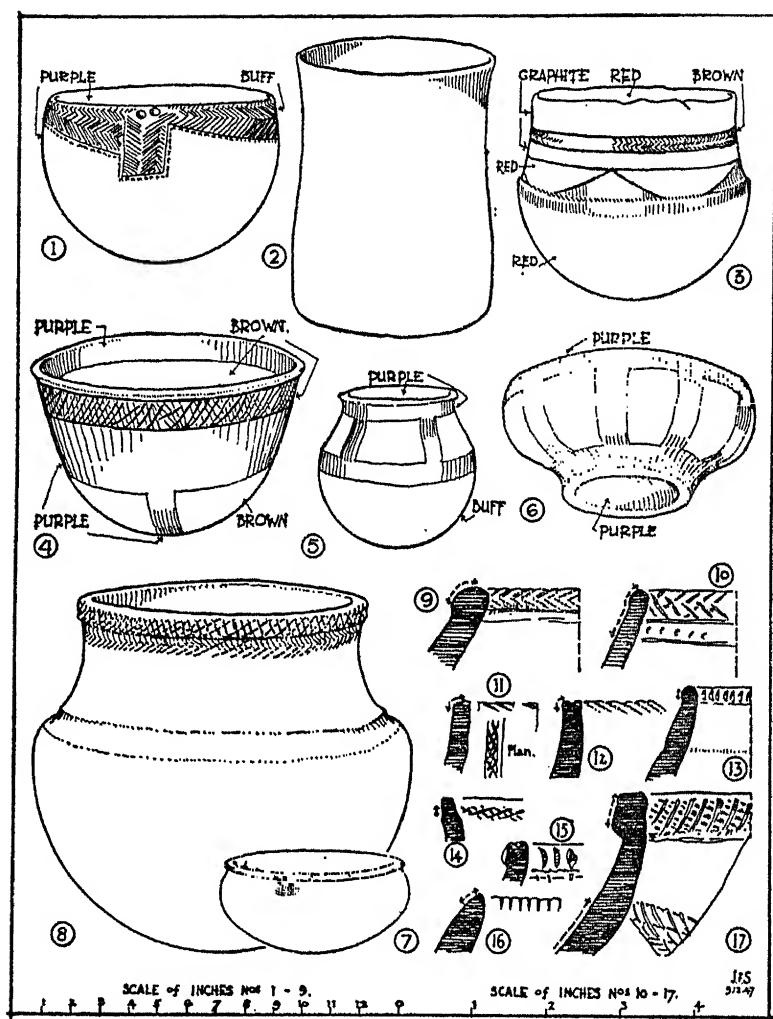


Figure iv



Figure iv.

## POTTERY FROM BECHUANALAND AND NEIGHBOURING TERRITORIES.

1. A bowl with oblique masses of herringbone decoration below the rim and two small bosses in the central motif. The whole surface, with the exception of the decorated areas, was coloured purple. Surface find from the kopje to the north of Mapungubwe Hill. Probably related to Class BP<sub>1</sub> pottery. PU.

2. A beaker with a light reddish brown matt surface. From Losè, 16 miles north of Mahalapye Station. Reconstructed from fragments. Class BP<sub>1</sub>.

3. A carinated pot, in a red, brown and graphite ware. From the Western Midden, Mapungubwe.

4. A deep bowl in a brown ware. Painted with purple pigment which had been burnished. From Rock Shelter No. 2, Parma Kopje. PU. Restored from fragments.

5. A small shouldered pot, in a buff ware, painted with purple pigment which had been burnished. Surface find Parma Kopje. PU. Restored from fragments.

6. A bowl with a base, in a brown ware full of shale nodules. Painted in purple colour. From Mashoweng River.

7. A bowl in a fine brown ware with the interior blackened. The rim-band has fine diagonal comb marks. There are two patches of comb marks below the rim-band. From Serowe. Class BP<sub>1</sub>. CU.

8. A shouldered pot with a red matt surface. All decoration was made with rough comb marks. From Maokagane. Restored from fragments. MMK. Class BP<sub>1</sub>.

9. A rim fragment of a spherical pot, 6 inches over the rim, in a rough ware with a red matt surface. From Maokagane. MMK. Class BP<sub>1</sub>.

10. As last, but 7 inches over the rim, with a brick red matt surface.

11. A fragment of a large pot, as No. 9.

12. A fragment of a pot 7 inches over the rim, as No. 9.

13. A fragment of a pot 10 inches over the rim, with a purple matt surface. Otherwise as No. 9.

14. A fragment of a pot 8 inches over the rim. Otherwise as No. 9.

15. A rim fragment in a buff ware, as No. 9.

16. A rim fragment of a large pot in a reddish buff ware and as No. 9.

17. A fragment of a pot 11 inches over the rim, similar to No. 8.

The first three classes of the pottery from the Bechuanaland Protectorate were undoubtedly made by the old Sotho inhabitants of the territory, but in the present state of our knowledge it is impossible to be more definite. The survival of surface-colouring in the recent wares of the Tswana, Hurutshe and the Basuto, leads us to believe that it was ancestral to their pottery traditions.

*Miscellaneous Pottery.*

*Pottery from Touppe.*—The miscellaneous wares found at Touppe were all probably intrusive; they include fragments of Ovambo pottery, beakers identical with examples from Bambandyanalo, other fragments resembling the pottery of the Ila of Northern Rhodesia, and one lip-shard of Class R<sub>1</sub>, very similar to pieces from Gokomere and Parma.

*Painted Pottery.*—Some mention must also be made of the practice of painting pottery that has been recorded from the Bechuanalands and the adjacent territories; at Parma Kopje (<sup>3</sup>p. 49) (fig. iv, 5), from a site on the Mashoweng River, 15 miles west of Battlemound Post Office (fig. iv, 6), from Reids Drift, at the confluence of the Orange and the Zand Rivers, and from Kheis, on the Orange River, 70 miles (112km) below Prieska (<sup>4</sup>pp. 89 and 390).

The fabric of this pottery differs very much from site to site. The pieces from Parma are in a light grey clay, burnt to a buff surface; those from Kheis were full of minute fragments of a whitish material, and the clay of the others was composed largely of small nodules of shale. The decoration, with roughly painted horizontal and vertical bands of purple pigment, was very similar in all examples, and probably indicates that they were made by the same (or by nearly related) peoples. That these people may have been connected with the modern makers of painted pottery (at Walvis Bay, the Okovango marshes, and the Karanga of the Bulawayo District) (pl. xiv) is possible, but, in view of the dissimilarity of the designs used, is very unlikely.

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<sup>4</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Pottery from Natal, Zululand, Bechuanaland and South-West Africa. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXV, pp. 382-395, 1938.

#### IV.

### THE ANCIENT POTTERY OF THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

#### THE ANCIENT POTTERY OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL.

To a very large extent, the Northern Transvaal, at least as far south as the Zoutpansberg Mountains, is a province of the Southern Rhodesian protohistorical field, for the Venda invasion of the 18th century has so thoroughly absorbed the previous inhabitants that, while little enough is known of them, hardly anything is known of the pottery they made.

According to their legends, the Venda drove away the old inhabitants of their country, called the Ngoma, and even to-day they will not occupy the sites of the ancient villages (<sup>1a</sup>p. 10). The fragments of pottery ascribed to these people appear to have belonged to small globular pots with conical necks in a coarse brown ware. They were decorated with a band of short stitch-like incisions or rough cross hatching just below the rim and at the base of the neck (fig. v, 1). This pottery has much in common with rough examples of the Class R<sub>2</sub> wares.

Towards the west, however, the remains of an ancient civilisation have been discovered with an area of distribution that conforms very largely to the present political boundaries. Our knowledge of this civilisation is based primarily on two almost contiguous sites: Mapungubwe, an isolated cave-sandstone kopje, about a mile and a half due south of the junction of the Shashi and the Limpopo Rivers, and the neighbouring area of Bambandyanalo, lying a mile or so to the south.

The typical wares from these sites have been called Class M<sub>1</sub> and Class M<sub>2</sub> respectively; but, whereas Class M<sub>1</sub>

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<sup>1a</sup> van Warmelo, N. J.: The Copper Miners of Musina and the Early History of the Zoutpansberg. *Dep.Nat.Aff.Eth.Pub.* vol. VIII. Government Printer, Pretoria, 1940.

pottery is confined to the Kopje and its immediate surroundings, Class  $M_2$  was found everywhere. On the Kopje itself it was taken more frequently in the lower than in the upper strata of the deposits, but on the neighbouring sites it was almost the only kind of pottery found.

This Class  $M_2$  pottery, for which we now propose to use the symbol  $NT_1$ , was, with the exception of a few pieces from Touppe, practically unknown outside the type sites in the Limpopo valley. But the recent discovery of similar wares at Hillside, Bulawayo and Thaba ka Mambo, indicate that it had a wide distribution in Southern Rhodesia, where it was influenced by Class  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  pottery.

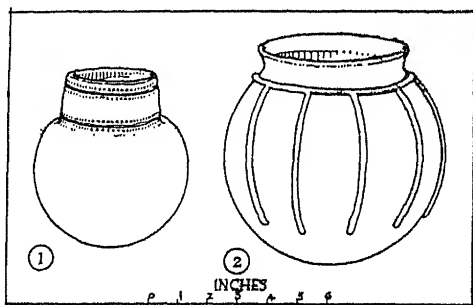


Figure v

1. Ngoni pottery, restored from fragments sent to the author by Dr. N. J. van Warmelo.

2. A ribbed pot, used in the "chisungu" ceremony of the Wemba of Northern Rhodesia. The mistress of the ceremonies plants seeds in clay smeared round the neck of the vessel. From a photograph by Dr. A. I. Richards.

### *Description of Class $NT_1$ Pottery.*

The pottery of this Class is lacking in the merging of types that often makes it difficult to classify the various vessels of Class  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  wares. Instead of this we find a very great diversity of form, surface finish and decoration, pointing to the association of a number of different traditions that had not, however, reacted on each other long enough to achieve the unity of a single coherent industry (p. 38).

<sup>1</sup> Fouche, L.: *Mapungubwe: Ancient Bantu Civilisation on the Limpopo*. University Press. Cambridge, 1937.

The types of vessels made include deep bowls, bowls with contracted openings, flared bowls, and beaker bowls; spherical and shouldered pots, beakers and dishes, the last two being peculiar to the Class (pl. vii).

Four types of beakers can be distinguished: those with vertical sides, flared beakers, bell-beakers and barrel-beakers (pl. vii, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 17).

All the beakers have more or less flattened bases, but in some the base had a slight curve that joined the pot wall with a distinct angle. In others the base was elliptical in section. This use of the flattened base for the beakers is all the more remarkable when compared with the uniformity with which the rounding of the bases of all the other vessels is carried out. Nearly all the beakers have some means of suspension, either by holes, pierced before burning, below the lip on opposite sides, or by means of tubular lugs. Nor are instances lacking in which the two methods are combined, the hole being pierced in a downward direction, and the lug being retained as a decorative boss beneath the external orifice of the hole. These beakers were in all probability used as drinking cups, or perhaps for hanging on the malala palms when tapping the sap. The beaker-bowls follow their lines very closely, the distinction being that they are inconveniently large for drinking vessels (pl. vii, 4, 8, 19, 20 and 21).

The little boat-shaped dishes are another type of vessel peculiar to this Class. They are well finished but undecorated, and sometimes are divided by a diaphragm. One example had a basketlike handle.

The spherical pots were the only vessels furnished with spouts which were either tubular or bridged (that is, partly open), but the channelled spout (like that of a jug) has not been found in this Class (fig. i, 7, i and iii).

The shouldered pots show no trace of the neck-body technique of the Class R<sub>2</sub> potters, but appear to take their rise naturally from the spherical pots, by making the lip vertical instead of horizontal. The neck may also be flared, conical, or, most frequently of all, concave. Examples were found with the neck pierced for suspension, one had a pedestal base (pl. vii, 12).

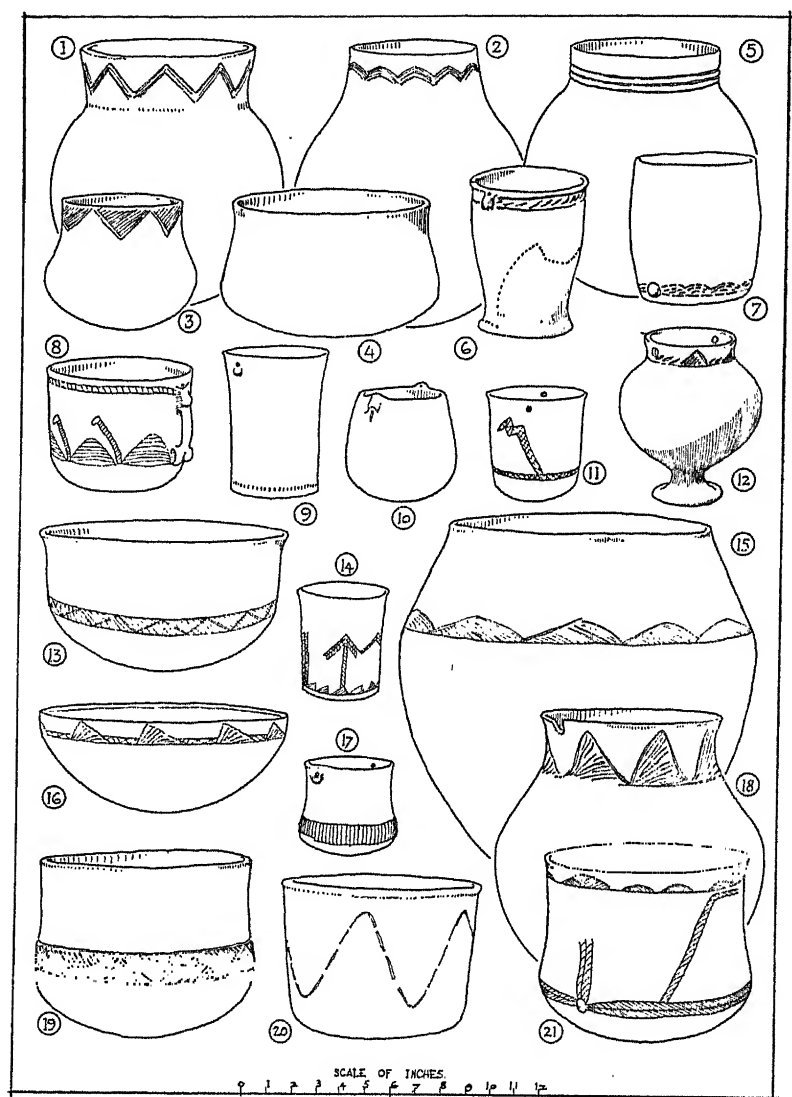


PLATE VII.

## PLATE VII.

## POTTERY FROM HILLSIDE, BULAWAYO; AND THE LIMPOPO VALLEY SITES.

1. A pot with a flared neck, in a black clay with a reddish yellow matt surface. The decoration was made with a blunt stick. Restored from fragments. From Hillside. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. NMByo.

2. A shouldered pot in a gritty grey clay with a greyish brown matt surface. Otherwise as last.

3. A beaker, in a blackish clay with a sepia surface. As No. 1.

4. A beaker bowl. As No. 3.

5. A pot with a short vertical neck, in a gritty dark grey clay with a yellow surface. From below the floor of Rock Shelter No. 1, Parma Kopje. Class R.G. PU.

6. A beaker with two cylindrical lugs, in a coarse grey clay with a brindled matt surface. The reverse side has a swan-neck motif and lines of point marks above the base and below the rim. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. From a grave on Pont Drift Farm. WUMS.

7. A beaker in a coarse clay with a brindled matt surface. From the grave area, Bambandyanalo. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

8. A beaker bowl, with two cylindrical lugs, one of which was incorporated in a handle terminating in a knuckle-shaped boss. The decoration was engraved on the burnt pot. From the grave area, Bambandyanalo. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

9. A tumbler beaker, in a coarse brown clay that had a black burnish and decoration similar to No. 14. The rim was pierced and has small bosses below the holes. As last.

10. A bellied beaker with cylindrical lugs, in a coarse clay with a brindled burnished surface externally. As No. 8.

11. A tumbler beaker with a black burnished surface. The rim was pierced. The decoration was engraved after burning. As No. 8.

12. A pedestal pot with a short flared neck, pierced for suspension, in a coarse clay with a brindled matt surface,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the rim and  $0\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height. As No. 8.

13. A beaker bowl, in a grey clay with a black burnish. From the Western Midden, Mapungubwe. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

14. A tumbler beaker, in a fine clay with a black burnish. The elaborate decoration was drawn with a fine line. As No. 8.

15. A shouldered pot in a brown clay. From the trial pit at Bambandyanalo. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

16. A bowl in a gritty grey clay with a dark brown matt surface. The decoration was engraved after burning. As No. 8.

17. A bell beaker in a grey clay with a black burnish, otherwise as No. 11.

18. A pot with a concave neck, in a blackish clay with a buff matt surface. Otherwise as No. 15.

19. A beaker bowl, in a grey clay with a fine black burnish. From the Western Midden, Mapungubwe. Intermediate between Class R<sub>2</sub> and Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

20. A beaker bowl, in a coarse grey clay (incorporating ground pottery) with a smooth grey surface. From the base of Wall No. 1, Trench No. JS. 2a. Mapungubwe. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

21. A beaker bowl, with a brindled surface, matt internally and burnished externally. The decoration, engraved after burning, represents the tribal cicatrization pattern. From Mapungubwe. Reproduced by the courtesy of the Archaeological Committee, Pretoria University. Class NT<sub>1</sub>. PU.

The deep bowls are often hemispherical in section. The rims may be flattened but more frequently they are bevelled towards the interior with a projection on the outside (fig. 1, 5, 5 & 6). This projection is sometimes enlarged to form a kind of handle which may be pierced for suspension, or decorated.

The pottery was decorated with both engraved and incised lines without distinction of the type of vessel, its stratigraphy or the motif employed. The use of the engraved line undoubtedly gave rise to the use of rectangles, inclined ribbons and bands of hatching (pl. vii, 21), but these motifs were just as frequently incised on the unburnt pot, while the hatched loops, which lend themselves readily to the incised method, are just as often engraved (pl. vii, 8). Thus it is evident that both these decorative techniques existed side by side throughout the occupation of our sites, and that motifs peculiarly applicable to the one were readily adopted by the other. The decoration is usually confined to bands, triangles and ribbons round the lower part of the beakers and the beaker-bowls, with occasionally a band round the neck. The shouldered pots had a line of triangles or loops round the shoulder and rising on to the neck of the vessel, while the decoration of the deep bowls, when present, was placed round the outside of the vessel and was directed downwards.

We have also many examples of single bosses on the beakers and beaker-bowls. This motif had its origin in the protuberant umbilicus, still admired amongst many tribes, and the decoration centering round it was inspired by the tribal cicatrization pattern, so often represented on the figurines (pl. vii, 21). The single boss is also found on the shoulder of some of the pots, where it, and its accompanying decorative band, show that the old potters habitually thought in terms of the vertically-sided vessel, and (in the case of the pots) regarded the shoulder as being the appropriate position for the representation of the tribal badge. The arrow and the inclined ribbon (pl. vii, 14) seen on many of the beakers are also motifs derived from the tattoo patterns, and indeed it may well be that very generally the decoration used in this Class has reference to these patterns, even when the allusion is not clear to us.



The use of stamped decoration was not a feature of this Class, and such examples as have been found were intrusive and should be regarded as belonging to Class BP<sub>1</sub> or as being a branch of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery.

*Intrusive Pottery.*

Although very little intrusive pottery was found at Bambandyanalo, yet the abundant presence of Class NT<sub>1</sub> at Mapungubwe enables us to correlate it with all the exotic wares found at the latter site, already dealt with under Class R<sub>1</sub> and Class R<sub>2</sub>. In addition to these we must consider four other kinds of pottery found, that were sufficiently distinctive to attribute them to different but unrecognised traditions, rather than to individual idiosyncrasies. These were:

- (i) Pottery with a decoration of triangles and loops rendered in a poor meandering style;
- (ii) Large pots with the necks decorated in a free bold manner that is reminiscent of the Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery, from Natal;
- (iii) Pottery with specular particles of mica in the surface finish, decorated with lightly incised triangles round the rim; and
- (iv) A piece of the neck of a pot decorated with an intricate meander of wide incised lines, perhaps related to the piece from Dhlo-Dhlo, illustrated by MacIver (<sup>2</sup>pl. xxiv, 10).

*Related Pottery Traditions.*

We are unable to name any pottery tradition that is closely related to the Class NT<sub>1</sub> wares, but the distinctive character of the beakers and beaker-bowls indicates a definite connection with the vertically sided pottery from the sites in the Bechuanaland Protectorate; although that pottery has a tendency towards the use of contrasted colour finish, the use of comb-impressions and of herringbone incisions, none of which are features of this pottery, while the engraved decoration of the NT<sub>1</sub> pottery is seldom seen on those wares. The bevelled rims (figs. 1, 5, 6) frequently found in Class BP<sub>1</sub>

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<sup>2</sup> MacIver, D. Randall: *Mediaeval Rhodesia*. Macmillan. London, 1906.

wares is also characteristic of the bowls of Class NT<sub>1</sub> pottery, but no example of the latter decorated with comb-impressions in the Bechuanaland fashion has so far been recorded.

#### MISCELLANEOUS POTTERY FROM NORTHERN AND CENTRAL TRANSVAAL.

With the exception of the Limpopo Valley sites and a few in Venda<sup>1</sup>land, little can be said of any of the other pottery industries whose existence is known to us only through isolated discoveries, but which must have flourished in this vast area at one time or another. No classification of this material is possible, but a description of some of the pottery found and recorded may be of interest.

*Klein Letaba.*—This little carinated pot, already mentioned under Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery as being possibly a distant relative of those wares, was found in association with the grave goods of a burial that included woollen cloth, copper bangles, and European glass, and therefore it must be dated as belonging to the early 19th century or later. The pot was in a mottled brown ware with a smooth finish, and about  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches (18.5 cm) over the rim. The lower part was globular and joined the upper portion with a sharp carination. A band of bold oblique incisions had been made on the wet clay just below the rim, and a similar band of cross-hatching ran round the base of the neck just above the carination. With this pot was a larger but less perfect example of the same ware, also a small undecorated shallow bowl or platter (<sup>3</sup>p. 627). Wells reports that similar pottery has been found near Messina, from old workings in the Rooiberg, from a cave in the Haenertsburg, and from as far south as the Waterberg (<sup>4</sup>p. 23) (fig. vi, 2).

*New Smitsdorp.*—A fragment of a spherical pot, about six inches (15 cm) in height and four inches (10 cm) over the rim was discovered in uncertain association with a grave. It was in a red clay with a smooth finish. A little more than half an inch (1.2 cm) below the rim was a band of herringbone incisions interrupted at intervals by groups of six short

<sup>3</sup> Wells, L. H.: Remains from a Grave in Klein Letaba District. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 625-632, 1935.

<sup>4</sup> Wells, L. H.: Ceramics in Southern Africa. *Anais da Faculdade de Ciencias do Porto*, XX, pp. 5-48, 1935.

incisions. Below this the herringbone motif is used in a vertical direction, but this time with a mid-rib. A similar treatment to that used on the body of the pot is seen on a sherd from Khami, illustrated by MacIver (<sup>2</sup>pl. xxv, 30). There can be no doubt, therefore, that this pot belongs to the Venda tradition (<sup>5</sup>p. 617).

*Naboomspruit.*—A quantity of pottery was found in a grave on the farm Ypres, near Naboomspruit. One of these, in a coarse clay, had a smooth red finish and a mouth diameter of four and a half inches (11.4 cm), was decorated along the outer margin of the rim with a series of notches. From the rim incised curved lines descend over the neck and shoulder of the pot. This combination of rim-notches and incised decoration has not been recorded elsewhere, and belongs to a tradition that has so far remained unidentified (<sup>6</sup>p. 632).

*The Waterberg.*—The collection of pottery from a cave in the Waterberg is in the Museum of the Witwatersrand Medical School, includes a fragment from a polychrome pot similar to the one from Mapungubwe (fig. iv, 3), which we have placed in Group i of Class R<sub>1</sub> and suggested that it may be related to wares from Zwartuggens and the Rooiburg. Another fragment belonged to a tall-necked pot in a grey ware, with multiple herringbone and has a moulded band. Similar pottery has a very wide distribution, for it has been recorded from Echo, from Mapungubwe, from Schoonoord and from the Natal coastal sites. Other pieces included a pinkish buff ware decorated with roughly incised zigzags and festoons, a shallow platter in a brown ware, fragments of a short-necked globular pot in a red-brown ware and a sherd belonging to a type of pottery similar to that of Class ST<sub>2</sub> at Aasvoelskop (<sup>4</sup>p. 23) (fig. vi, 3).

*Zwartuggens.*—A quantity of sherds were found near the bead-making sites described by Harger. These include pieces with pendant triangles and cross-hatched bands outlined with

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<sup>5</sup> Berry, G. F.: Human Skeletal Remains from Smitsdorp. *S.Afr. Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 616-621, 1935.

<sup>6</sup> de Saxe, H.: A Human Skeleton from Naboomspruit. *S.Afr. Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 632-635, 1935.

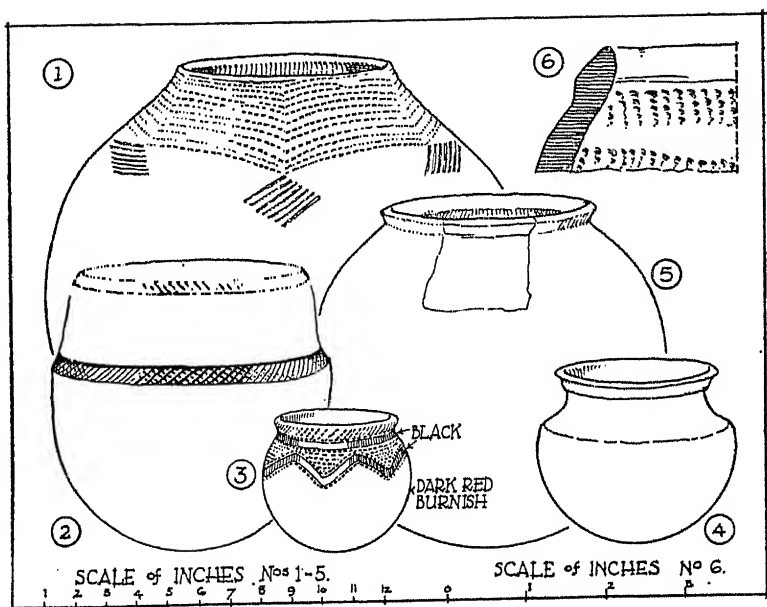


Figure vi

## ANCIENT POTTERY FROM THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

1. A globular pot, in a light red ware with a smooth surface, from Magaliesburg. From a drawing by Dr. L. H. Wells. Class ST<sub>1</sub>. WUMS.
2. A carinated pot, in a brindled ware with a matt surface, from Klein Lataba. From a drawing by Dr. L. H. Wells. WUMS.
3. A small pot in a polychrome ware, from Aasvogelskop. From a drawing by Dr. L. H. Wells. Class ST<sub>1</sub>. WUMS.
4. A small pot in a grey ware, from an old working at Krantzklouf, near Krugerspos. TM.
5. A globular pot with a flared rim, in a brown ware with a smooth surface, from Buispoort near Zeerust. From pl. vii, 7 (10), and further details supplied by Dr. van Hoepen. Class ST<sub>2</sub>. WMB.
6. A rim fragment of a globular pot, 7 inches over the rim, in a coarse black ware with a buff surface. From Koffiefontein. MMK.

comb impressions, bands of herringbone incisions and lines of oval impressions, all very similar to old Hurutshe work and Class BP<sub>3</sub> pottery from the Bechuanaland Protectorate.<sup>7</sup>

*Rooiberg Tin Workings.*—There are a number of sherds in the Museum of the Archaeological Survey that exhibit similar characteristics to Groups i and iii of Class R<sub>1</sub> and Class M<sub>3</sub>a and M<sub>3</sub>b from Mapungubwe, and Class BP<sub>3</sub>,

<sup>7</sup> Harger, H. S.: A Stone Bead Industry of the Western Transvaal. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVIII, pp. 129-142, 1940.

including the herringbone bands and the contrasted triangles in red and black.

Another little pot from these workings with an elliptical mouth is in a light buff ware in this collection, has a strongly everted lip and below it is a line of deep irregular vertical incisions. It is very unusual to find a pot in South Africa with a mouth that is not relatively circular.

*Krantzkloof*.—There is a little pot with some unusual features in the Transvaal Museum (No. 37/211). It was found in an old mine working at Krantzkloof near Krugerspos, in the Lydenberg District (fig. vi, 4).

It is in a grey clay with a smooth surface and measures about  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches over the rim. The body is globular and joins the neck with a slight carination. The lip is rounded and everted and finished to the neck with an ogee moulding. The pot is reminiscent of Class R<sub>1</sub> wares, but nothing quite like. It has been recorded elsewhere.

*Pottery from the Letaba Hot Spring.*

Mr. C. W. Bates has described the pottery found in and around the mounds that mark the activities of the ancient salt-workers in the neighbourhood of the Spring.

He has classified the pottery into two categories, E<sub>1</sub> and E<sub>2</sub>; the first he correlates with the M<sub>1</sub> wares from Mapungubwe (and therefore with our Class R<sub>2</sub>) and the second as showing affinities with M<sub>2</sub>.

Judging from Bates' description and his illustrations, it is probable that these conclusions are well founded, but some of the sherds are very unlike anything that has been recorded before. One of these in particular belonged to a deep bowl-shaped vessel with a rim that projected at right angles to the pot wall, and had a line of comb impressions along its edge. Another sherd seems to resemble pieces from Arcturus (pl. iii, 4). The only complete pot resembles in shape, but on a much larger scale, such pieces as (pl. iv, 1), but the hatching along the lip is different to that found on any previously recorded wares.

Bates noted the frequent use of rim decoration in his second category and also a generalised resemblance to modern Sotho pottery.

All this pottery was associated with numbers of soapstone vessels (some of them with three legs) that were probably used in the salt making.<sup>7a</sup>

#### THE ANCIENT POTTERY INDUSTRIES OF THE SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL AND THE NORTHERN ORANGE FREE STATE.

For the purposes of our enquiry, this great stretch of territory forms a homogeneous unit, for records of a number of carefully explored sites, between Magaliesberg on the north and Winburg on the south, have disclosed to us a coherent series of pottery industries, and enabled us to form a clear picture of the history of its ceramics. All of these sites are covered with the remains of stone-walled cattle-pens and dwelling-enclosures. In many instances the latter are occupied by the walls and wind-screens of huts, probably once roofed with thatch. On the completely treeless downs of the Orange Free State the thatched roofs were replaced by roughly corbelled domes of undressed stone, and thus (in this locality only) a new architectural feature was evolved that has no counterpart in the rest of South Africa. This completely treeless environment had its effects in other directions as well, for iron-smelting could no longer be carried on for lack of fuel, and we also find that all the finer types of pottery ceased to be made.

The pottery from these sites divides itself naturally into two groups:

- (i) A group of well-made wares in which contrasted colours predominated with the use of comb impressions, and generally followed the lines of Class BP<sub>3</sub> pottery.
- (ii) A group in which pots predominated that were undecorated save for a variety of rim-notches.

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<sup>7a</sup> Bates, C. W.: A Preliminary Report on Archaeological Sites on the Great Letaba River, North-Eastern Transvaal. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.* vol. XLIII, pp. 365-375. 1947.

These we may term Class ST<sub>1</sub> and Class ST<sub>2</sub> respectively. Both these classes were used concurrently, and may have been derived from a common source, the one being the ware used on special occasions and by special persons, the other a common domestic pottery. Under the inhospitable conditions prevailing in the stone-hut settlements, the former gradually ceased to be made, and Class ST<sub>2</sub> with its various modifications became the standard ware. But under more kindly circumstances further north Class ST<sub>1</sub> continued to flourish and eventually gave rise to the Pedi pottery industries that are still in existence.

### *Class ST<sub>1</sub> Pottery.*

The sites from which the wares of this Class have been recovered have either been incompletely investigated, as at Chwenyane (<sup>8</sup>p. 133), or they have been deficient in material, as at Aasvogelskop, near Johannesburg. As a result we have no type site from which a representative collection of the pottery has been made. At the former site (destroyed according to living tradition by the Mantatisi in 1823), the middens around the chief's great place yielded a preponderance of this pottery and the other middens a preponderance of the plain wares. The decorated pottery, judging from Laidler's illustrations (<sup>8</sup>pl. xvii, 367), appears to have consisted of pots with tall or short necks, and also spherical pots. These were ornamented round the upper part of the body with chevrons formed with a double line of comb impressions, or by triangles formed in a similar manner. The areas enclosed by these lines were coloured either red or black so as to contrast with the rest of the pot. The lips of some of these pots were notched, and one fragment was found with a projecting notched band just below the rim.

At Aasvogelskop, according to Wells (<sup>4</sup>p. 24), it comprised burnished wares, red, black, and polychrome, as well as unburnished material. The forms include globular pots with the neck short and vertical, neckless bowls, and small

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<sup>8</sup> Laidler, P. W.: South African Native Ceramics: Their Characteristics and Classification. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVI, pp. 93-172, 1938.

cups with everted rim, some of which resemble bell-beakers. The necks and lips of these vessels were decorated with comb impressions. One of the most striking pieces recovered was a small pot, about four inches (10 cm) over the rim, which was rounded, slightly everted, and decorated with diagonal comb impressions. Below this the neck was encircled by a band of dead black. Below this again there was a chevron band, also in dead black, between two lines of comb impressions. The area between the chevrons and the neck was filled in with similar impressions. With the exception of the bands, the surface had a dark red burnish (fig. vi, 3). The whole appearance of the pot is very reminiscent of Class R<sub>1</sub> pottery. The less ambitious vessels have multiple lines of impressions; bands of impressions, in oblique lines, forming a rim-band. The surfaces of the pots are coloured red, purple red, or black, the interior and the exterior being frequently contrasted; all very similar to Class BP<sub>3</sub> pottery.

At Magaliesburg (<sup>9</sup>p. 532) the patterns are not so regular and are confined to the region of the neck and shoulder, the lines of impressions being usually curved, an incipient attempt at the arcade motif that is still so popular (fig. vi, 1). Nevertheless they all belong to the same general scheme. One of the best finished pots shows a series of curved lines with oval stylus impressions between them; these were burnished black and the remainder of the vessel finished with a red, matt surface.

A great deal of attention appears to have been given to the surface finish, and the contrasted red and black treatment for the interior and the exterior of the bowls was frequently used. The typical vessels made were globular shouldered pots and bowls.

#### *Class ST<sub>2</sub> Pottery.*

Although this Class of pottery is characteristic of those settlements where the huts are roofed with stone, and has been found on all the sites where they have been recorded, yet it is not peculiar to them. Wares very similar to it have

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<sup>9</sup> Jones, T. R.: Prehistoric Stone Structures in the Magaliesberg Valley, Transvaal. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 528-536, 1935.



been found at Buispoort, Aasvogelskop and Magaliesburg; in all of these sites there are huts with stone walls which we regard as being the parent form of the stone-roofed variety. Of these sites, the pottery from Buispoort is much richer than the others and we therefore regard it as the type site for this phase of Class ST<sub>2</sub> pottery.

At Buispoort, near Zeerust, van Hoepen has unearthed considerable quantities of this pottery.<sup>10</sup> The sherds represent a heavy ware with thick walls. The favourite types used were wide-mouthed bowls or pots with slightly flared lips (fig. vi, 5), and vertical-sided pots. The bodies of the pots were globular as a rule, but a few examples of sub-carination were found, showing that the tendency towards a bi-conical section, as in the modern practice, was already in existence. The most striking feature of the assemblage was the discovery of a number of feet and one side-handle from three-legged pots. The pot surfaces were usually smoothed and without burnish, some showing a specular micaceous glitter, but whether from accident or design it is difficult to say. Most of the pottery was entirely undecorated but a number of pieces had the lips notched and grooved, not only in front but also on the edge. There were also a few pieces of Class ST<sub>1</sub> pottery present.

None of the settlements with stone-roofed huts have been investigated with the same care as Buispoort, but considerable collections of pottery have been made by Pullen from two sites, Kalkoen and Rietspruit.<sup>11</sup> The first is four miles (6.4 km) west of Frankfort, the other fifteen miles (24 km) to the south-east of the town. Smaller collections have also

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<sup>10</sup> van Hoepen, E. C. N., and Hoffman, A. C.: Die Oorblyfsels van Buispoort en Braklaagte, Noordwes van Zeerust. *Arg.Nav., Nas.Mus.*, II, pp. 1-25, 1935.

<sup>11</sup> Pullen, R. A.: Remains from Stone-Hut Settlements in the Frankfort District, O.F.S. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXVIII, pp. 334-344, 1942.

been made by Laidler from sites near Heilbron,<sup>13</sup> and by Daubenton from two sites, the one two miles (3.2 km) and the other twenty miles (32 km) to the south of Steynsrust.<sup>12</sup> Thus a distance of about ninety miles (145 km) separates the Frankfort and the Steynsrust sites, while Heilbron lies between them. It is instructive to note the variations that occur in the pottery from these different places.

With the exception of local variations the pottery from all the stone-hut settlements is very much the same. But since the material from Kalkoen and Rietspruit is more plentiful than all the rest put together, it will be regarded as typical for this phase of Class ST<sub>2</sub> pottery.

The types of vessels made were mainly more or less globular pots (some being slightly shouldered), bowls with wide and/or contracted mouths, cups, and flower-pot-shaped vessels with flat bases (see pl. vii, 20). One foot from a three-legged pot was found. A few of the pieces had been decorated with comb impressions and burnished in contrasting colours; in other words, they were stray members of Class ST<sub>1</sub>. A number had a matt finish, but the majority had simply been smoothed more or less carefully.

At Heilbron and Rietspruit (also more rarely at Kalkoen) the whole surface of the vessels had been covered with closely set impressions, made with the fingernail or some blunt

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<sup>12</sup> Daubenton, F.: A Preliminary Report on Stone Structures near Steynsrust, O.F.S. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXV, pp. 364-370, 1938.

<sup>13</sup> Laidler, P. W.: The Archaeology of Certain Prehistoric Settlements in the Heilbron Area. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXIII, pp. 23-70, 1935.

[The material for this article was obtained during what the author calls, "a strenuous week-end", from sites as far as seven miles apart. A survey of the sites was made, but although it is mentioned several times in the text, it was lost before publication. The original settlement was attributed to people he calls "Makalanga or Baroswi (Monomotapa)" whose occupation lasted about a century, and was followed by the builders of the stone-roofed huts. These were probably a "Bantu people considerably influenced by the Hottentots." This occupation was terminated by the Matabele or Mantatisi about 1820. Subsequently wandering Bushmen squatted on one of the sites. These conclusions were based on the pottery and skeletal material discovered in all too small quantities.]

implement. At Heilbron and Steynsrust designs formed with point-marks had been used, and at the former place irregular lines of clay had been pinched up out of the pot walls to form rough ridges round the pots.

On all sites the chief method of decoration was by making notches or grooves on the lips of the vessels. At Heilbron and Steynsrust this had been done with a sharp instrument after the pots had been dried, but at Kalkoen and Rietspruit the grooves had been made in most cases while the pot was still wet with a piece of smooth stick about a quarter-inch (6 mm) in diameter, with the result that the clay had been squeezed out on either side of each impression. At Rietspruit only single lines of these impressions had been used, but at Kalkoen as many as three lines were made one above the other, with the result that a new decorative motif was evolved.

#### *Koffiefontein.*

At Koffiefontein, about 56 miles (90 klm) south-east of Kimberley, there are rough stone structures from which a crude, but much decorated pottery has been obtained. The prevalent type seems to have been a globular pot (fig. vi, 6) in a buff or greyish clay and almost covered with comb marks made when the surface was in a semi-fluid condition. Some of the sherds are covered with closely-set finger-nail impressions, and others are related to pieces from Maokagane (fig. iv, 14).

Stone-hut building has been traced as far as Machadadorp. Beyond that place the presence of trees makes the provision of more ordinary roofs practicable. Laidler appears to have investigated the settlements there, but all we know of the pottery is that examples of both Class ST<sub>1</sub> and Class ST<sub>2</sub> were found.

#### *Other pottery objects from the Transvaal and the Northern Orange Free State.*

The only pottery objects from this area that cannot be included under the heading of domestic earthenware are spoons, figurines and pipe-bowls.

*Spoons*, in every way similar to those from Bambandy-nalo, have been found at Steynsrust and Frankfort stone-hut settlements.

*Figurines.*—A model of a wildebeeste cow and a "phallus" (probably a stylised figurine) were found at Krugerskraal near Heilbron.<sup>8</sup>

*Pipe-bowls.*—Pottery pipe-bowls are very common on the walled sites and have been recorded from near Bethlehem,<sup>14</sup> from Kalkoen and Magaliesburg.

It will be seen that all these objects are closely associated with Class ST<sub>2</sub> pottery.

### *History.*

There is no doubt at all that all these old settlements owe their extinction to the troublous times that overtook the whole of this area during the early decades of last century. That some of them must have been in existence for many years prior to the final overthrow is also evident from the accumulations of midden with which they are surrounded. Any further statement would be the merest speculation, for we have neither historical records nor even tradition to guide us.

Van Hoepen has shown that the stone-walled settlements in the Zeerust district (<sup>10</sup>p. 24) were built by the Hurutshe, and those to the north of Machadodorp (<sup>16</sup>p. 65) (as distinct from the stone-hut settlements) by the Pedi. That those people were also the builders of Aasvogelskop is also probable from the nature of the pottery, and it is likely that a nearly related clan was responsible for Magaliesburg.

Regarding the stone-hut settlements more uncertainty exists. Lowe has suggested the Ghoya as the builders, and Laidler suggests the Taung. There the matter must rest until sites that can definitely be associated with these people have been investigated, and the remains of their material culture (more particularly their pottery) published.

There is, however, another line of enquiry open to us: Ellenberger has shown that, according to tradition, a branch

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<sup>14</sup> van Hoepen, E. C. N.: 'n Versameling Daggapype uit die Distrik Bethlehem. *Arg.Nav.Nas.Mus.*, II, No. 4, pp. 41-46, 1935.

<sup>15</sup> van Hoepen, E. C. N.: A Pre-European Bantu Culture in the Lydenburg District. *Arg.Nav.Nas.Mus.*, II, No. 5, pp. 47-74, 1939.

of the Fokeng of Ntsuanatsatsi (<sup>16</sup>p. 19) crossed into Natal towards the end of the 16th century, and went on to Tembuland where their descendants are still living. Now it is an interesting fact that pottery with many of the characteristics of Class ST<sub>2</sub> wares re-appears in Natal where it is associated with pipe-bowls, and that modern Mpondo pottery has much in common with it. It is therefore possible that the stone-hut settlements may be attributed to these Fokeng or to their offshoots; for they are the only people who are recorded as having lived in the Southern Transvaal, Natal and Tembuland.

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<sup>16</sup> Ellenberger, D. F., and MacGregor, J. C.: *History of the Basuto*. Caxton Publishing Co. London, 1912.

## V.

### THE ANCIENT POTTERY OF NATAL.

The pottery made by the old inhabitants of Natal is known to us almost entirely from accidental discoveries and from wind-eroded coastal sites in the neighbourhood of reefs of tidal rocks. These we know, from the quantities of shells in the kitchen middens, served as an important source of food and were doubtless the cause of the settlements being placed where we find them. These sites are never marked by permanent buildings, such as those so frequently found on the old settlements of the Transvaal, and any dwellings they may have contained must have been of the lightest materials, for they have completely vanished. On such sites there is little or no stratigraphy and the potsherds of the earliest occupants are mingled with those left by the most recent visitors. Nevertheless by a process of elimination, and by the comparative study of the wares from a large number of sites, it has been found possible to classify the pottery under three main heads:

Class NC<sub>1</sub>—including all pre-Bantu pottery.

Class NC<sub>2</sub>—including pottery belonging to the earliest Bantu inhabitants, iron-using pastoral cultivators with Sotho affinities.

Class NC<sub>3</sub>—including the pottery belonging to the later Bantu inhabitants, who were iron-smelting pastoral cultivators, and probably belonged to a section of the Lala people.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Schofield, J. F.: Natal Coastal Pottery from the Durban District: A Preliminary Survey. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXII, pp. 508-527, 1935.

Schofield, J. F.: Natal Coastal Pottery from the Durban District: A Preliminary Survey, Part II. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXIII, pp. 993-1009, 1936.

*Class NC<sub>1</sub> Pottery.*

Very few examples of pottery have been found in Natal that can definitely be assigned to the pre-Bantu period. Only two pieces of undoubted Hottentot pottery have come to light, one at Umhloti and the other at Umgababa. Two little pots with horizontally pierced lugs were found at Otto's Bluff,<sup>2</sup> and Brien has reported a crude, undifferentiated vessel (with apparently Middle Stone Age associations) from a shelter at Isipofu.<sup>3</sup> We have already dealt with the pottery from Cathkin Park, and it is sufficient to say here that the pottery with Late Stone Age associations is undoubtedly Ronga ware from Portuguese East Africa, while that with supposed Bush traits had Iron Age associations, and was in all probability made by Bantu refugees.

*Class NC<sub>2</sub> Pottery.*

This pottery has been found on a number of sites in the neighbourhood of Durban generally associated with Class NC<sub>3</sub> ware; but also quite independently, as on the Durban Bluff sites. Stray pieces have been found elsewhere in Natal, as at Chaka's Leap in the Tugela Valley, while, from Umgazana Cave on the Pondoland coast, a related pottery has been described from the Late Stone Age horizons, as we have previously stated. It is commonly made from a soft grey or blackish clay that can be cut with a knife and was burnt to a light buff at the surface, which frequently shows a decided crackle. It was sometimes burnished to a deep red or brown colour, or blackened. More often it was left with an untreated sandy surface. No examples of contrasted surface colouring have been found.

The types of vessels made included platters, globular pots, both with and without vertical lips, shouldered pots, shouldered bowls, bowls, and vertically-sided vessels. Some of these types, more particularly the last, appear to have been made with flattened bases.

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<sup>2</sup> Chubb, E. C., and Schofield, J. F.: Rock Engravings at Otto's Bluff, Natal. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXIX, pp. 678-680, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Brien, P. G.: A Description of Preliminary Excavations in a Rock-Shelter at Isipofu. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXIX, pp. 751-755, 1932.

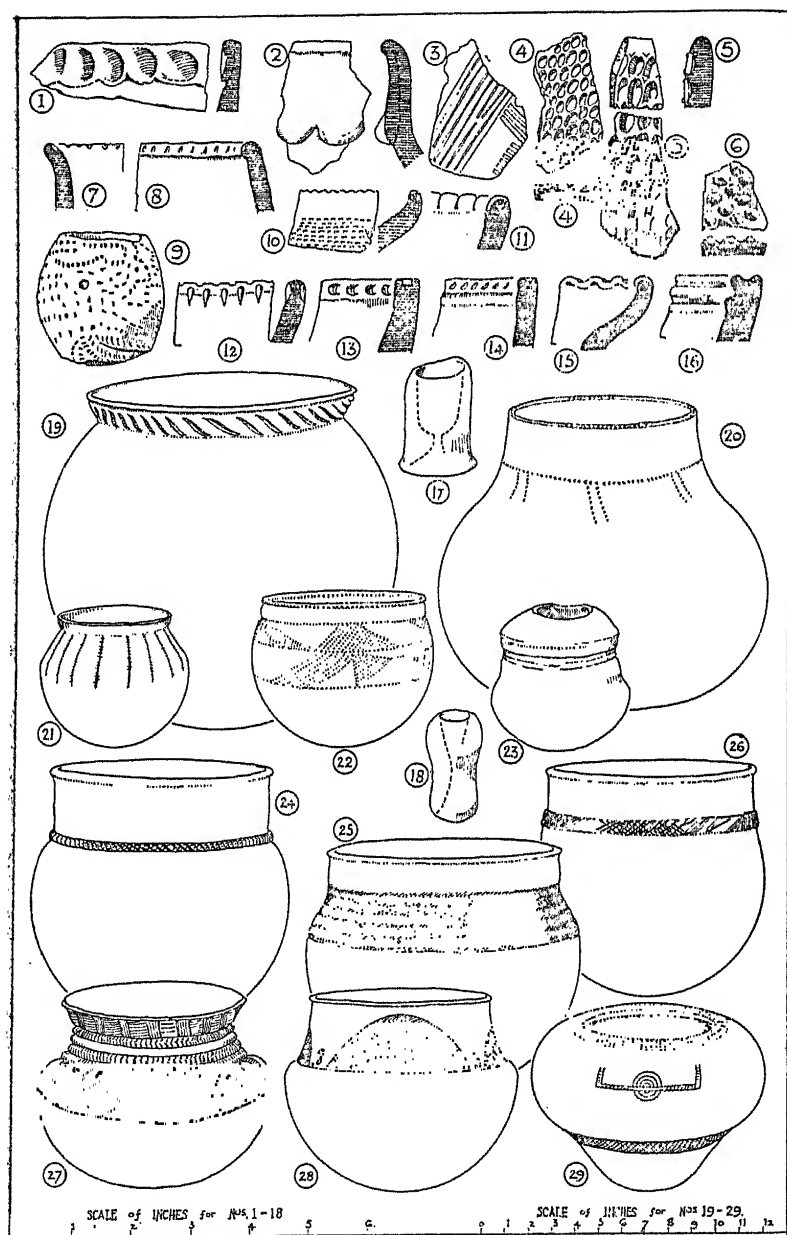


PLATE VIII.



## PLATE VIII.

## NATAL COASTAL POTTERY.

1. A fragment of the rim of a vertically-sided vessel 13½ inches over the rim, in a rough ware with a brownish grey sandy surface. From Umgazana Cave, Pondoland. Class NC. DM.
2. A fragment of the rim of a large vessel, in a yellow ware with a red surface. From Fairwell Avenue, Durban. Class NC.
3. A fragment with surface lining, in a dark grey clay with a brindled surface. From Fairwell Avenue, Durban. Class NC.
4. A fragment with a honey-comb surface, in a dark grey clay with a brick-red surface. From the Beacon Site, Montclare, Durban. Class NC.
5. A fragment with nail-marks, in a dark grey clay with a buff surface. As last.
6. A fragment with a cuspidated surface. As last.
7. A fragment of a vertically-sided vessel, 20 inches over the rim, in a coarse dark grey ware. The rim was notched on its interior aspect. From Zig-zag Cave, Pondoland. Class NC. DM.
8. A fragment of a vertically-sided vessel, 12½ inches over the rim. The rim was notched on its exterior aspect. As last.
9. A pipe bowl decorated with point marks. In a brindled ware. The section is similar to that of No. 18. From Karridene. Class NC. DM.
10. A fragment of a shouldered pot, about 11 inches over the rim, in a light grey clay with an Indian-red matt surface. From the Beacon Site, Montclare. Class NC.
11. A fragment of a vertically sided vessel, about 18 inches over the rim, in a grey clay with a red surface. From a depth of 18 inches, near Mapumulo. Class NC.
12. A fragment of a rim with alternating notches, in a grey clay with a black burnish. From Umhloti Dunes. Class NC. WUMS.
13. A rim fragment with crescentic impressions. See No. 20.
14. A rim fragment with short diagonal incisions on the edge, in a grey clay with a buff surface. From the University Site, Durban. Class NC. WUMS.
15. A fragment of the rim of a shouldered pot, 10½ inches over the rim, in a coarse blackish ware. From Zig-zag Cave. Class NC. DM.
16. A fragment with a groove along the edge of the rim and another just below it externally, in a grey clay with a red surface. Class NC. WUMS. From Umhloti Dunes.
17. A pipe bowl in a reddish ware. From Tinley Manor. WUMS.
18. A pipe bowl in a grey ware with a buff surface. Numbers of similar pipe bowls have been found associated with NC pottery. WUMS.
19. A globular pot with a short flared neck, 11½ inches over the rim, in a grey clay with a buff surface. Restored from fragments from Umhloti Dunes. Class NC.D. WUMS.
20. A shouldered pot in a grey clay with a brown burnished surface. The edge of the rim had large crescentic impressions, the shoulder was decorated with a line of smaller gouge marks with double pendant lines at intervals. Reconstructed from fragments from Umhloti Dunes. Class NC. DM.
21. A globular pot with a short flared neck, 5 inches over the rim, in a light brown ware. Restored from fragments from Umhloti Dunes. Class NC.D.
22. A globular pot with a short vertical neck, in a fine grey clay with a black burnish. The lip has short vertical grooves alternately on the interior and the exterior. The body was decorated with two zones formed with impressions made by a "comb" with small circular teeth. Restored from fragments from Umhloti Dunes. Class NC. WUMS.
23. An unusual pot, in a black clay with a brown burnish. From a depth of 7 feet, at No. 127, Sydenham Road, Durban. Class NC.D. DM.
24. A globular pot with a vertical neck, in a black clay with a brown burnish. Reconstructed from fragments, from the Monastery Site, Tongaat. Class NC. DM.
25. A shouldered pot, in a grey ware with a purple brown finish. Restored from fragments from Umhloti Dunes. Class NC. WUMS.
26. A wide-mouthed pot or beaker bowl, in a grey clay with a brown burnish. Reconstructed from fragments from Umgababa. Class NC. DM.
27. A decorated pot with a spout, in a black clay with a buff finish. Restored from fragments from Weenen Commonage. Class NC.
28. A pot with a conical neck, in a black clay with a brown surface polished with graphite. Reconstructed from fragments from the Monastery Site, Tongaat. Class NC. DM.
29. An inverted gourd-shaped pot, in a brindled ware with a graphite burnished surface. As last.

Two forms of spouts were used — the tubular and the channelled (fig i, 7, i and ii)—but the fragmentary condition of our material makes it impossible to associate them with any particular type of vessel.

Anomalous vessels have also been recorded, for example the curious pot illustrated by Péringuey (4p. 126, fig. 18), which appears to have been a surface find on the Berea at Durban. Pipe-bowls are of common occurrence; these are mostly plain, but they are occasionally decorated with point-impressions, and in one instance a roulette appears to have been used (pl. ix, 9, 17 and 18).

All forms of decoration were carried out before burning, the principal methods being :

1. The notched or crenelated rim :

- (i) Semi-circular notches or grooves on the edge of the rim. When these were made on the wet clay it was pressed out in a characteristic manner to form a wavy line round the rim edges (pl. viii, 15).
- (ii) Alternating cuts on the opposite edges of the rim (pl. viii, 12).
- (iii) Simple transverse or diagonal cuts (pl. viii, 7, 8 and 11).
- (iv) Gouge-marks on the edge of the rim (pl. viii, 13).
- (v) Small vertical grooves on the edges of the rim (pl. viii, 22).

2. Surface decoration :

- (i) Honey-comb. The whole of the outer surface was covered with oval hollows, measuring about 4 mm. by 3 mm. and 2 mm. deep (pl. viii, 4).
- (ii) Cuspidated. The whole of the outer surface was covered before burning with a slip of creamlike consistency, and this was worked into little irregular points (pl. viii, 6).
- (iii) Nail-marked. The whole outer surface was covered with impressions made by digging the finger nails into the wet clay to a depth of about 4 mm. (pl. viii, 5).

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<sup>4</sup> Péringuey, L.: The Stone Ages of South Africa. *Ann.S.Afr.Mus.*, 1911, viii.

- (iv) Lined. The outer surface was scored with shallow lines to form a bold chevron design (pl. viii, 3).
- 3. Moulded Decoration in relief:
  - (i) Vertical strips of clay were worked up out of the pot wall while it was wet, then transverse grooves were made in them with a piece of smooth stick or other similar object.
  - (ii) Breast decoration. This seems to have been made by working a band of clay on to the green pot below the rim, and then modelling the lower edge into breast-like projections (pl. viii, 2). In another variety the lower edge of the clay band was cut into chevrons, and little blobs of clay were pushed into its junction with the pot wall, giving a very rich effect.
  - (iii) Simple boss-like projections below the rim were also used.
- 4. Bands of triangles:

The necks and less frequently the bodies of vessels were surrounded with bands of triangles alternately left plain or filled in with a hatching of comb impressions (pl. viii, 22).
- 5. Lines of small impressions:

Made with a grass stalk or a point to form triangles, festoons and other simple motifs.

Thus Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery has the notched rim-edge, the point-mark designs and the closely set surface decoration. All these are distinguishing features of the Class ST<sub>2</sub> wares from the stone-hut settlements. These, together with the pottery pipe-bowls, so often found on the sites in Natal, lend colour to the view that the bearers of both these Classes of pottery belonged either to the same people or to nearly related tribes. Nor does the absence of stone-huts east of the Drakensberg invalidate this suggestion; for a method of construction that originated in a treeless environment would naturally be abandoned as soon as the bleak uplands of the interior were exchanged for the fertile Coastal Belt. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the huts of the old-time Mpondo and Thembu were the roughest and poorest of any erected by a Bantu people; as if their forebears had relinquished one type

of hut construction before they had acquired the necessary skill for the construction of another. It is also significant that Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery was also made by people who used iron, but did not smelt it on a large scale. We have already seen that the bearers of this class of pottery were probably the Fokeng or a nearly related people.

*Class NC<sub>2</sub>D Pottery.*

In addition to the pottery described above, we find another kind, often associated with it on the open sites, but also in circumstances that indicate a considerable antiquity. Examples occurred at a depth of eight to ten feet (2.45-3.05 m) in the excavation for a reservoir at Durban North, from the foundations of Glenwood High School, Durban, and from a depth of fifteen feet (4.5 m) at Colenso. The clay and the surface finish are very similar to those described above. The commonest type of vessel was a pot with a more or less globular body and a short flared neck, but flared bowls, bowls and pots with retracted rims, and vessels with vertical sides are also known. All types had rounded bases (pl. viii, 19, 20, 21 and 23).

The pots with flared necks frequently had a line of bold diagonal incisions just below the rim. Pieces are also found with the whole body covered with groups of short parallel incisions, with the edge of the rim notched, with pendant triangles running down the body from the neck. In one instance the body had been divided by vertical lines about an inch (2.5 cm) apart; these had short stitchlike transverse incisions throughout their length, as though the potter was attempting to represent the seams in the sides of a leather vessel of a similar shape (pl. viii, 21).

The affinities of this phase of Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery are clearly with that from Buispoort, for the shapes of the vessels are very similar. The resemblance between the pots with the flared necks from the Western Transvaal and those from Natal is particularly striking, while the vertically-sided vessels and the decorative use of the notched rim are characteristic of both areas.

The pottery in contrasted colours, found with the coarser wares from the Zeerust District, is entirely absent in Natal. From this we would infer that Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery is derived entirely from the latter. The people who made it may have been a branch of the Fokeng who emancipated themselves from their Hurutshe overlords—who appear to have been the ruling caste at Buispoort—and carved out a destiny for themselves, far away, beyond the Drakensberge.

### *History.*

The historical notices of pottery are negligible, but references to the use of iron are more frequent. From these we can judge that by the middle of the 16th century iron, although well known, was very scarce in the southern part of our area. Perestrello, writing of the loss of the "Sao Jao" galleon, in 1554, stated that the "kaffirs" (in this case undoubtedly Bantu in the neighbourhood of Port Shepstone) used "wooden pikes with their points hardened in the fire, for these are their principal arms, and some assegais with iron points" (vol. I, p. 225).

About sixty years later, and near the same area, tradition relates that the easy victory the Xhosa chieftain Tshawe gained over his brother was owing to the iron assegais of his followers, while his opponents had nothing but wooden weapons (vol. III, p. 131).

In 1686 the survivors of the "Stavenisse" found that iron was being smelted by the Xhosa settled round the mouth of the Buffalo River, near East London. All metals were still very scarce, for the wreck of their ship was quickly surrounded by hundreds of people who hacked and burnt the iron out of her timbers. We are also told that "Copper and iron give inducement to the murder of those that have them" (vol. I, pp. 29-46). Other sailors from the same wreck spent a year on the Bluff at Durban, where they found similar conditions

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<sup>5</sup> Theal, G. M.: *Records of South-Eastern Africa*. Clowes. London, 1898.

<sup>6</sup> Theal, G. M.: *History and Ethnography of South Africa, South of the Zambesi*. London, 1909.

<sup>7</sup> Bird, J.: *Annals of Natal*: Davis. Pietermaritzburg, 1888.

and also noted that the inhabitants were addicted to smoking, a fact that definitely connects them with our archaeological sites (*ibid.*, p. 32).

These meagre historical records are still further amplified from the archaeological field, for, as we have already seen, typical pieces of Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery have been found in the caves and shelters near Cala (<sup>8</sup>p. 39), and at Qolora in the Transkei, and it was doubtless from these wares that the Bushmen acquired the practice of "all over" patterning for their pottery.

The influence of this pottery spread in yet another direction, for, as we shall see, the Nguni invaders of the Eastern Province do not seem to have been pottery makers, and some of them, the Xhosa, for example, have apparently never acquired the art, but others—the Mpondo and the Thembu—adopted the NC<sub>2</sub> practices and have retained them to the present day.

#### *Class NC<sub>3</sub> Pottery.*

Characteristic pottery of this Class has been recorded from coastal sites between Sinkwazi and Umgababa, and from as far inland as Nsoko in Swaziland, from the Tugela Valley, Weenen and Otto's Bluff near Pietermaritzburg. At present there is no evidence that it has been found further south. Its reported occurrence at Kayser's Beach, East London, must await confirmation. In every instance this pottery has been associated with iron slag. In several cases (notably the Tugela Valley sites, and the University and Hillary sites at Durban) it is evident that it was made by people who carried on an extensive iron-working industry.

The clay commonly used was coarse and gritty, little care having been taken to rid it of natural impurities, nor was its texture improved by the pounded potsherds that were often added to it. Most of the vessels seem to have been left with a smooth self-coloured finish, but a brown matt surface (probably originally burnished) is almost as common, while a dead black or a graphite finish are found occasionally.

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<sup>8</sup> Hewitt, J., and Stapleton, P.: On Paintings and Artefacts in Rock-shelters near Cala. *Ann. Albany Mus.*, No. 4, pp. 1-63, 1931.

The most striking vessels of this class are undoubtedly the pots with concave necks and everted rims, varying from a few inches to two feet or more in diameter. The body was usually globular or spheroidal, always with a rounded base. In a few instances the sides were made almost vertical and a vessel of the beaker-bowl type was produced (pl. viii, 26). In addition a common household-ware was made, consisting of spherical pots and bowls with flared sides; all of these were given a very poor finish and left entirely undecorated.

The neck-body junction of almost all the large pots was decorated with one or more bands of diagonal cross-hatching, herringbone or groups of parallel lines. From the neck, hatched triangles and bands or arcades of lattice ran down on to the body of the pot. The neck was frequently left plain, but more often it had groups of diagonal lines or cross-hatching, sometimes cut so deeply that the decorated areas appear to have been thickened out. All the decoration was carried out with great vigour and in very good style on the unburnt clay of the pottery.

Our knowledge of this pottery is almost entirely confined to the domestic wares, used when gathering shell-fish from the off-shore rocks or by the workers at the iron-smelting furnaces. A few fragments of the finest quality have however been found. In these the band round the neck is so carefully finished that it resembles a piece of cord. Nor had this resemblance escaped the potters, for in the Natal Government Museum, Pietermaritzburg, there is a drawing of a pot from Hot Springs in the Tugela Valley. On this, not only is the cord represented, but there are four knots as well and from each of these a pendant cord runs down on to the body of the pot. The large vessels of this Class are very similar in form to pottery from Niekerk, and in both form and decoration to No. (ii) of the intrusive wares at Bambandyanalo.

In addition to these wares a number of pots with conical necks have been found associated with the more plentiful types. These were all decorated with multiple lines of herringbone round the shoulder or the neck (pl. viii, 25). Among the latter there was one in a deep red ware with a fine matt surface; the herringbone pattern was confined to a pair of large lunettes

bounded by lines with small stylus impressions at short intervals (as pl. viii, 28). This pottery is very similar to a sherd from Schoonoord in the Lydenburg district found at a depth of three feet (90 cm) beneath the surface, and also to a similarly shaped but smaller pot from Echo Farm, near Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (pl. iii, 2).

A few anomalous vessels have also been recorded, such as the gourd-shaped pot from Tongaat (pl. viii, 29), with the curious circle motifs; the beautifully decorated spouted pot from Weenen (pl. viii, 27) and the bold torus moulding (evidently a part of a very large pot) from the same place.

### *History.*

The association of Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery with iron smelting has enabled us to trace something of its antecedents. During the 16th century the tribes occupying Natal, although they knew and valued both iron and copper, appear to have been unable to smelt them and had to purchase their metals at exorbitant prices. For as Lavanah related in his account of the wreck of the "Santo Alberto" in 1593 "they value . . . iron and copper, and for very small pieces of either will barter cattle, which is what they esteem most" (5vol. II, p. 249), and further "the Kaffirs returned in the morning with eight cows for which they were given pieces of copper worth about two cruzadoes" (about 5d. in our money).

After crossing the Tugela, however, the survivors found that the relative value of their barter-goods had changed, for as Lavanah wrote: "These negroes are even more covetous and self-interested than those we met earlier in the journey, and for the same amount of copper, of which they wear bracelets, for which the others gave three cows, they would only give one, it not being as valuable among them; they also value calico which the others would not accept. It is therefore proper to trade with copper and iron for the purchase of provisions until reaching this place, and to keep calico for this place and the country beyond, for this is what they demand in exchange for cows" (*ibid.*, p. 326).

As Lavanah noted that the Tugela flowed from the north-east to the south-west at the place where it was forded, he was



probably referring to a stretch of the Buffalo River above its junction with the Tugela just to the west of the Qudeni Mountains, and thus not far from Hot Springs, where quantities of Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery and the remains of an extensive iron-smelting industry have been found. The association of smelting with the use of cloth points to contacts with the more civilised north. This is borne out by the resemblances we have noted between some of this pottery and wares from Southern Rhodesia and the Limpopo Valley, and thus lends colour to an ancient tradition to the effect that, before the Zulu conquest, the northern part of Natal was occupied by the Lala—skilled metal workers related to the Shona.

From all this we can conclude that Natal was originally peopled by two distinct branches of the Bantu:

1. The bearers of Class NC<sub>2</sub> pottery, who came from the west and had been associated with the Hurutshe and Fokeng, if as is probable some of them did not belong to the latter. We have no indication regarding the date of their advent, but they were well established in the country before the middle of the 16th century.
2. The bearers of Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery, who came from the north and were related to the Shona peoples of Southern Rhodesia, and known to tradition as the Lala. They were probably later arrivals than the others and we first hear of them as occupying southern Zululand during the last decade of the 16th century. They were destroyed by the Zulu about 1820, but some fragments of the tribe have survived in the neighbourhood of Pietermaritzburg.

Our knowledge of the antecedents of the Nguni peoples is too vague for us to attempt an elucidation of their relations with these people, beyond what we have stated above. Still less can we describe the early relations of the Bantu pioneers with their Bushman predecessors. Although many hundreds of decorated shelters are known in the Drakensberg, very few of them have any deposits to speak of, so we have no means of judging how long they were in contact with each other. Our surest guides (the fragmented potsherds the Bushmen seem to have prized so highly) are almost entirely lacking.

The surviving paintings depicting domestic animals and Bantu warriors belong to the latest phases of the art, although figures with pointed hats and karosses decorated with tails and scalloped edges (obviously identical with those still worn in Basutoland) have been recorded and assigned to the highest antiquity—perhaps on insufficient grounds.

## PART FIVE.

# THE RECENT PRIMITIVE POTTERY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

### I.

## INTRODUCTORY.

The vast expansion of the economic and military resources of the peoples of Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries left no corner of the primitive world uninfluenced by their commerce, their culture, or their arms. Here in South Africa these changes synchronised with the Zulu, Mantatisi, Matabele and Swazi wars brought about a series of mass movements of whole populations. The repercussions of these wars were felt as far north as the Great Lakes, and were consummated by the European penetration into every part of the sub-continent that had been completed by the turn of the century.

In the general breaking down of tradition that all this entailed old ways were forgotten, while the loss of wealth, prestige and leisure brought a lowering of interest in traditional things and a consequent loss of ability in such handicrafts as survived. Thus we find that specialised forms of pottery have tended to disappear, and amongst many tribes only the more ordinary kinds of household utensils are now made, while others have long since ceased to make any kind of pottery.

The making of ceremonial pottery has not yet altogether ceased, more particularly in Rhodesia. The duality of traditions in the same community, with which it is probably connected, and which we consider to have been one of the outstanding characteristics of Bantu social life frequently reflected in their pottery, has almost completely disappeared. Alongside of these tendencies there has grown up an increasing specialisation in pottery making, fostered by more secure

conditions and easier transport. Thus in Zululand much of the pottery is brought from Basutoland, and it has become the custom for a skilled potter to sell her wares to the local store, thus supplying families who are either unable or unwilling to make their own.

When all these factors are considered it is not surprising to find that the requirements of a Bantu household are satisfied if it is provided with six or seven types of vessels.

1. A large pot for brewing beer, sometimes with a capacity of about 50 gallons (900 litres).
2. Pots for carrying water, about a foot (30 cm) in diameter, usually with a short neck or a restricted mouth.
3. Pots for serving beer, similar to the last.
4. Pots for drinking beer.
5. Pots for cooking vegetables and porridge, usually widemouthed bowls. Those for the latter purpose have a larger opening.
6. Shallow bowls or platters for serving food.
7. Small pots for serving relishes.

There are many local variations of this *batterie de cuisine* as, for example, among the Zulu, who use wooden dishes for serving meat and have closely-woven covered baskets for the relishes.

## II.

### THE RECENT PRIMITIVE POTTERY OF THE SHONA AND ALLIED PEOPLES.

#### *Introduction.*

We have included Southern Rhodesia and the Zoutspanberg District of the Northern Transvaal under one head, because ethnically they form a single zone, being mainly inhabited at the present time by people who belong to the Shona or an allied stock.

We have seen how Southern Rhodesia has been in the past the stage for at least four invasions by as many different Bantu peoples: the Proto-Sotho, the Shona, the Roswi, and the Nguni. We have also seen that each of the first three of these invasions had as one of its results the introduction of distinctive traditions in the making and decoration of pottery. It may seem, therefore, somewhat anomalous to find that the Nguni invasions alone left no appreciable impression upon the

pottery traditions of the Colony. We believe the reason for this is to be sought in the predominant position held by woman in all things that appertain to African ceramics.

It must be evident that, after the vicissitudes of the thirty years of journeying from Zululand and Natal, very few women who were acquainted with the ancestral traditions of the Matabele could have entered Matabeleland with Mzilikatzi's hosts. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that his warriors were accustomed to recruit not only their soldiers but also their wives from the ranks of the conquered, made it inevitable that any traditions that had survived would be speedily replaced by those of the indigenous inhabitants. Thus it has come about that the present-day pottery of Matabeleland owes its origin largely to the Roswi or Class R<sub>3</sub> traditions, and the same applies to the Shangana in the eastern part of the Colony. Nevertheless, the Nguni invasion synchronised with a very profound change in the pottery practices of a large part of the country; whether or not they were the cause of this change we do not know, but the fact remains that, whereas the generalised variation of the Proto-Sotho wares we have termed Class R<sub>1</sub>G had persisted up to the third decade of the last century, thereafter it disappeared, and its place was taken by the present wares of Matabeleland and by the Zezuru pottery of Mashonaland.

### *Ethnology.*

Since our pottery is classified on a tribal basis, it is necessary for us to say something on the present ethnology of the African peoples of Southern Rhodesia. Without embarking on too much detail, these may be regarded as belonging to four groups:

- (i) The Sotho, including the Tswana and the Biwoa.
- (ii) The Shona, including the Tonga, the Tawara, the Korekore, the Zezuru, the Budja, the Manyica, the Ungwe and the Karanga.
- (iii) The Roswi, including all the sections of those people with the Venda, the Duma and the Danda.
- (iv) The Nguni, comprising the Matabele and the Shangana.

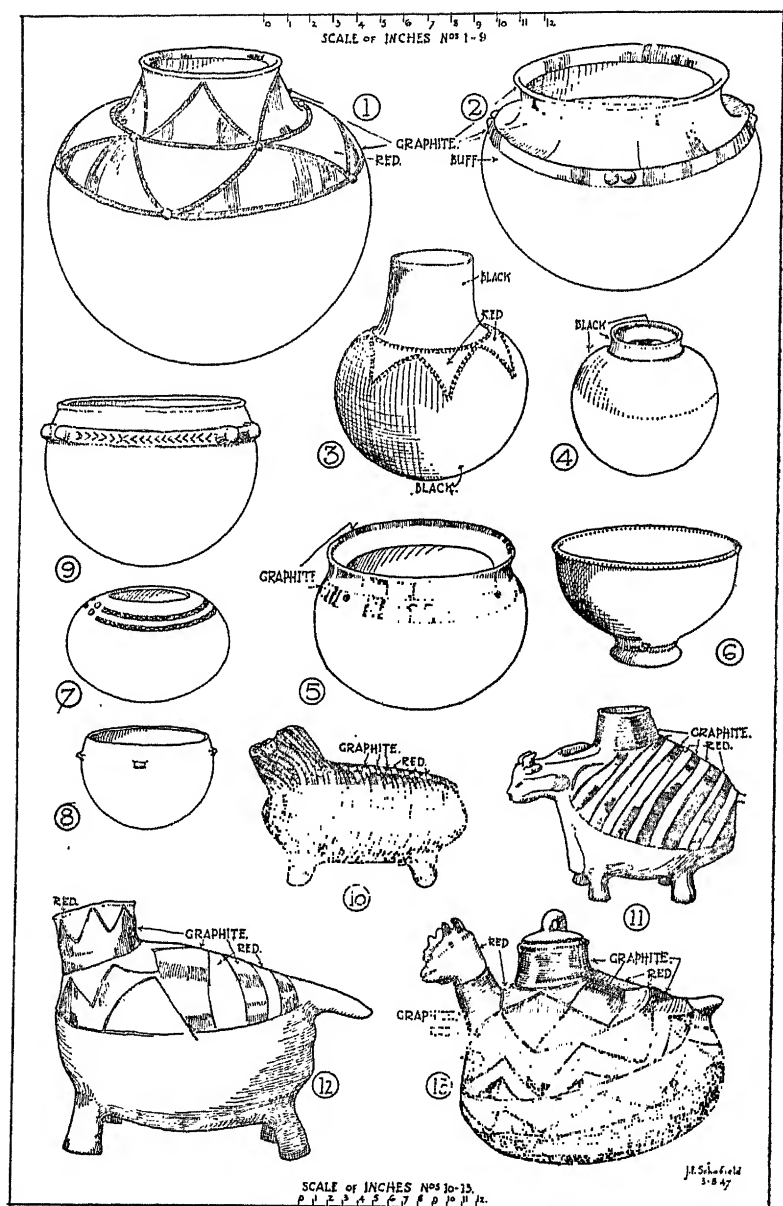


PLATE IX.

## PLATE IX.

## THE RECENT POTTERY OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA

1. A large beer pot, Zezuru, from Sinoia West, in graphite and red, the coloured areas being divided by bands of diagonal point marks with conical bosses at the intersections; these are called "buttons" and appear to have no special significance. See 2, p. 46, No. 2. QVMM.

2. Large bowl ("gaha"), Budga, Mtoko district, used for washing the body. The neck is divided into panels of graphite burnish and spaces left reddish or buff self-colour; there are four pairs of projections below the carination. A narrow band of burnish is carried round this zone and over the projections. *Ibid.*, p. 42 and fig. v, 4. QVMM.

3. Pot with a tall tapered neck,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the rim; in a fine brown clay surface finished in contrasted red and black. Coloured areas divided by wide lines probably made with a blunt stick. Probably Zezuru, from Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.

4. Pot with a short vertical neck,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the rim, and about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height. The clay was grey and gritty with a brown matt surface, burnished black on the neck, the interior of the rim and the upper part of the body. Probably Zezuru, from Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.

5. Pot with a short concave neck, 8 inches over the rim and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height. Probably a type of "gaha". The rim, the neck and the upper part of the body were burnished with graphite. On the body, below the neck, are dimpled impressions, single and pairs alternating. Zezuru, from Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.

6. Pedestal bowl,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the rim and  $4\frac{5}{8}$  inches in height. In a blackish gritty clay, black matt on the outside and graphite burnish on the inside. Point impressions round the rim and the neck of the pedestal. Probably Zezuru, from Echo Farm, Salisbury. QVMM.

7. Spheroidal bowl ("chikare"),  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches over the rim, 7 inches in diameter and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height, in a black ware. Tonga of the Makota Reserve. Used by women only for vegetables and gravy. The two raised discs are called "homo", and said to represent facial markings. QVMM. *Ibid.*, p. 44 and fig. vii, 1.

8. Sub-spherical bowl ("chirongo"), Budga, Mtoko District, used by the women only for cooked food. Four elongated projections are placed below the rim at equal intervals. *Ibid.*, p. 45 and fig. vii, 2. QVMM.

9. Sub-spherical bowl, about 8 inches over the rim, in a brown clay. Below the rim are four pairs of breast-like projections with a slightly raised band decorated with herringbone incisions between them. Found on surface, Niekork Ruins, Inyanga. From a photograph by Mrs. C. Martin, Penhalonga. Probably Tonga and used as No. 8.

10. "Fuko ya Nebandge." Ceremonial vessel in the form of a male zebra. Obtained by Mr. H. Posselt in 1900 from a cave near Fern Spruit, south-east of Fort Victoria. NMBYo.

11. Water and/or beer pot, Zezuru, Chikwakwa Reserve. In the form of a goat ("mbane-matamai"). Length 12 inches, width  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, with eight oblique black stripes over the upper part of the body. The tail is broken. QVMM. From a drawing by Mrs. E. Goodall.

12. Canopic vase of the Mondoro Cult, in the form of a lion. Zezuru. The surface finish is in graphite and red contrasted colouring. QVMM. From a photograph by Mrs. E. Goodall.

13. Festive bird of the Shawasha ("hari ye djongwe"), the surface finish is in graphite and red contrasted colouring. QVMM. From a photograph by Mrs. E. Goodall.

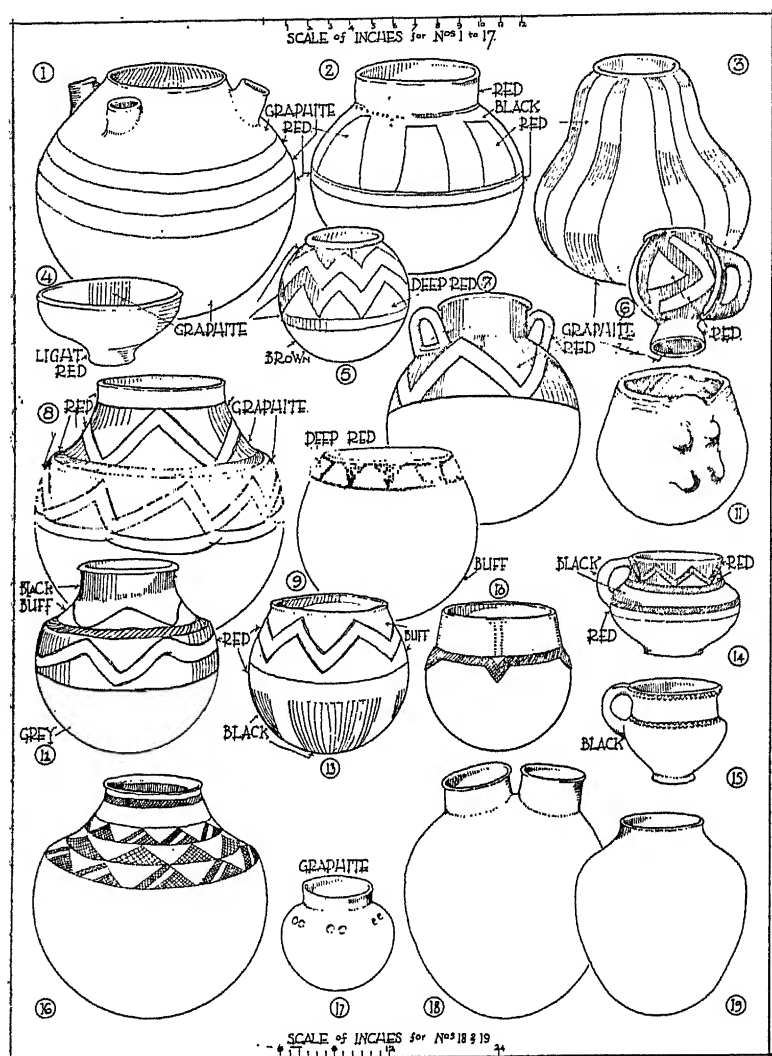


PLATE X.



## PLATE X.

## THE RECENT POTTERY OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA AND VENDALAND.

1. A globular pot with four spouts, used in the "thevhula" ceremony of the Venda. Formerly in the possession of Chief Ratshimpi Tshivasa. From a photograph by G. P. Lestrade. Venda. PU.

2. A pot with a short vertical neck. From Mphefu's village, Louis Trichardt. Venda.

3. A gourd-shaped pot. As last.

4. A cover-bowl with a pedestal base. From Sinthumule's village, Louis Trichardt. Venda. DM.

5. Small spherical pot with a flattened base. From Messina. Venda. DM.

6. A cup with a pedestal base. From Mphefu's village, Louis Trichardt. Venda.

7. A pot with a vertical neck and loop handles. Njanja, from the Enkeldoorn District. From a photograph in the QVMM.

8. A carinated pot from Sebungwe. There is a band of comb marks just above the shoulder. SAM.

9. Painted pottery from the Bulawayo District, in a light buff ware. Karanga. SAM.

10. A pot with a conical neck, in a black ware with a matt surface. Karanga. From Morganster, Zimbabwe. TM.

11. A "rain pot" in the possession of Mrs. E. D. Giesecke of Tshakoma. From a photograph by Lestrade. Perhaps ancient Lemba.

12. A small pot similar to No. 8. SAM.

13. A pot from the Plumtree district. Roswi. SAM.

14. A cup from near Sinoia, Lomagundi District, probably Korekore. From details supplied by Mrs. E. Goodall. QVMM.

15. A cup, probably Korekore. As last.

16. A beer pot. Ordinary Tonga pottery from the Mkota Reserve. From a photograph by Mrs. E. Goodall.

17. A "chipfuko", used for cooking vegetables, in a black ware with a graphite polish. There are six pairs of "eyes" round the shoulder. Refer (2) p. 43. After a photograph by Mrs. E. Goodall. Manyica. QVMM.

18. A "mbidziro", a Chief's double-necked pot for serving beer. From a photograph by Mrs. C. Martin. Refer (3). Manyica.

19. A "musudzi", used for storing beer, in a black to reddish ware. From a photograph by Mrs. C. Martin. Refer (3). Manyica.

NOTE on No. 11: According to investigations recently carried out by Dr. N. van Warmelo, these pots were unearthed during excavations for a dipping tank. They have no connection with any rain making ceremony and they cannot be associated with the Lemba people.

This classification is of a more or less tentative nature, for it was made without reference to the pottery practices of the peoples concerned. We believe that when more evidence from this source is available it will be found necessary to modify the composition of groups ii and iii.

The territorial distribution of these people will be touched on when describing their pottery, it is sufficient to state here that it is exceedingly complicated and entirely beyond the scope of this work.

*The Present Distribution of Pottery Practices.*

Our knowledge of contemporary pottery practices is unfortunately very fragmentary, as a result we can describe in detail the wares made by only a few of the tribal units; but taking our subject in the broadest possible manner, we can distinguish two main divisions, and several apparently independent industries.

1. *The Northern Division*, extending along the Zambesi Valley, but also penetrating far to the south. The pottery traditions of this area are characterised by the carinated profile, the use of the stamp or comb in decoration (both features of the pottery made by the Senga people of Northern Rhodesia), and to a less extent by the use of contrasted colour in the surface finish.

2. *The Central Division* (including Vendaland). This pottery is characterised by the use of contrasted colour and a great variety of ceremonial vessels. Typical of this division are the wares of the Zezuru, but it is spread throughout the greater part of the country and probably follows the dispersal areas of the Roswi, to whose ancestral pottery, Class R<sub>3</sub>, it owes much of its inspiration.

3. *Miscellaneous Pottery Industries*, including those of the Manyica and the Karanga.

1. *The Northern Division.*

*Pottery from Sebungwe.*—Sebungwe is situated on a river of that name that flows into the Zambesi about 95 miles (150 km) below Livingstone. There are communities at Roswi and Tonga in the neighbourhood, and in the pottery from this place, now in the South African Museum, Cape Town (No.

6070), we can recognise something of their influence (pl. x, 8 and 11). Its most striking features are the well-marked carination, the use of incised bands and the bold chevrons in contrasted colours with which it is decorated.

*The Pottery of the Korekore.*—The Korekore, who live in the Districts of Lomagundi, Darwin, Mrewa and Mazoe, form a wedge between our Northern and Central Divisions (1p. 12). Their pottery, as can be seen from the illustrations, has much in common with their northern neighbours. The use of comb impressions may indicate Senga influence, or may be a legacy from Class R<sub>1</sub>G wares, for these were still used in the Lomagundi District down to the early part of last century. The flattened bases of the two cups (pl. x, 14 and 15) are not peculiar to this pottery, but are frequently found on small drinking vessels—even when all the other types have rounded bases.

*The Pottery of the Budja.*—These people occupy widely separated areas in the Victoria, Gwelo, Marandellas, Mrewa and Mtoko Districts (1pp. 12 and 36). It was from this last that the two pieces of their pottery (pl. ix, 2 and 8), now in the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum, Salisbury, were obtained. The larger measures nine inches (23 cm) over the rim, and the neck joins the body in a distinct carination. Directly below this there are four pairs of breast-like projections. The neck is divided into panels; a black polish alternating with the reddish colour of the pot. A band covering the projections is also polished with black. The other is a small relish-bowl in a black ware, with four elongated projections placed a little below the rim at equal intervals.

The larger of these two pots has obvious affinities with those of the northern tribes. The twin projections have their counterparts in Class R<sub>2</sub> pottery. As it was intended to be used as a wash basin, they may have some hidden meaning.

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<sup>1</sup> Posselt, F. W. T.: *Fact and Fiction*. A short account of the Natives of Southern Rhodesia. Rhodesia Printing and Publishing Co. Bulawayo, 1935.

[The best account we have, in a popular form, of the tribal distribution, political organisation, religion, customs and legends of the African peoples of Southern Rhodesia.]

The small bowl belongs to the same category as the women's pottery of the Tonga. The little projections may be nothing more than abbreviated handles (<sup>2</sup>p. 44). In addition to these vessels of a special, if not a ceremonial character, the Budja make use of a number of different types of pots and bowls, all very similar to the ordinary wares of the Zezuru.

*The Pottery of the Tonga.*—For several centuries at least the name Tonga (or Toka, Atonga, Ronga and its many other variants) has been applied to the African peoples dwelling in the Zambesi valley between the confluence of the Gwaai and the Gorongosa mountains and in the southern part of Portuguese Territory as far as the Natal border. The word seems to be derived from *ku-tonga*—to judge, hence *batongwa*, those who are judged; that is, those who obey the behests of an overlord, whether he be a Monomotapa, a Mambo or a Manukosi (<sup>1</sup>p. 15). But alternatively the word may mean "those that judge for themselves", and acknowledge no exterior authority. It is not for us to decide between these rival interpretations; but there can be no doubt but that the name Botonga and its variants was applied by the Portuguese as early as the beginning of the 16th century to the peoples who owed allegiance to the Monomotapa.

The following account of pottery-making amongst the Tonga in the neighbourhood of Mtoko, in the north-eastern corner of Southern Rhodesia, is from information supplied by the kindness of Mrs. E. Goodall, of the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum, Salisbury, and must not be understood as applying to Tonga living in other districts.

There are two distinct kinds of pottery in use. One is a black or brown ware, comprising spheroidal and sub-spherical cooking pots, deep bowls about nine inches (23 cm) in diameter, and the little bowls with flattened bases, about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches (12 cm) over the rim, that are used for serving relishes

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<sup>2</sup> Goodall, E.: Rhodesian Pots with Moulded Decorations. *Nada*, No. 23, 1946, pp. 36-49.

[A clear account of the ancient and recent primitive pottery with moulded projections in the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum, Salisbury. Admirably illustrated with photographs and line-drawings.]

(pl. ix, 7 and 9). These pots have a poor black finish and are decorated with slightly raised bands with herringbone or cross-hatched incisions (called cross-stitching), discs, representing the tribal facial cicatrisation, breast-like projections, and simple geometrical motifs, all placed a little below the rim (2pp. 44 and 45, fig. vii, 1 and 3). The larger types of these pots are sometimes provided with fibre carrying-slings. All are used exclusively by women, and are never touched by men, who know very little about them.

The other kind consists of carinated pots (pl. x, 16), from 10 to 18 inches (25-45 cm) in diameter, used for brewing and serving beer and also for storing water, and U-shaped bowls used for cooking porridge. This ware is particularly well made, and is so thoroughly burnt that it gives out a clear ring when struck. With the exception of the porridge-bowls most of the pots are decorated; directly above the carination with three contiguous bands of cross-hatched triangles, covering the whole surface of the neck to a little below the rim. The hatching is done when the clay is fairly dry, with the result that the lines of the first incisions are not burred when the cross lines are drawn over them. This gives the decoration a very clean-cut appearance that is easily recognised.

When the pottery is to be burnt it is placed on the open ground and completely covered with a conical pile of a particular kind of bark. As a slow and even firing is essential in the process, the burning is only done on a still evening when there is no sign of wind. The fire is started at the apex of the pile with a bunch of grass the size of a bird's nest, and burns slowly downwards. "It is indeed a pretty sight to watch the red-hot pots gradually re-appear as their pyre of bark is reduced to ashes, and they glow with a metallic lustre in the gathering twilight", as Mrs. Goodall puts it.

When completely cooled, the pots are washed inside and outside with a red decoction of the bark of the *msototo* tree, said to prevent them from cracking when first used. With the exception of this stain, no other colour is used, for the red and graphite surface finishes so much in favour with their neighbours are never employed by the Tonga potters.

It will be seen at once that some of these practices bear a great similarity to those of another Tonga people—the Ronga, living near Lourenço Marques. In both we find the carinated profile, and in both the pottery is treated with a red decoction before being used.

The duality we have so often noticed in Bantu ceramics takes a hitherto unrecorded turn amongst the Tonga, and we find a special type of pottery being used by one sex only; thus accentuating the lack of family integration that is exemplified by many other traits of the social life of the African peoples of South Africa.

## 2. *The Central Division.*

*The Pottery of the Zezuru.*—VaZezuru is a generic name apparently meaning “those living in the high-lands”, applied to a number of communities in the Districts of Mazoe, Lomagundi, Salisbury, Hartley, Marandellas and Charter, and thus occupying Central Mashonaland (<sup>1</sup>p. 13). The pottery made by these people is very characteristic and has an influence over a much wider territory than they occupy. All the usual range of utensils is included, and a number of interesting ceremonial vessels as well (<sup>2</sup>pp. 41-47) (pl. ix, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12 and 13).

Large shouldered pots are used for making and serving beer (Bent illustrates one with two mouths), wide-necked bowls with concave necks are used for cooking, and shouldered pots with tall necks are also made. The clay varies a good deal with the locality, but generally it is a reddish brown, and in all except the finest pottery has a gritty texture and is usually burnt to a reddish buff. Almost all this pottery is treated with some form of contrasted colouring. At its simplest, this consists of black or graphite burnish round the inside of the lip, the neck, and the upper part of the body; the remainder being left the self-colour of the clay. The more elaborate vessels are coloured red, brown, black, graphite and buff. The coloured areas, usually triangular in shape, are separated by broad lines made with a chisel-edged stick or alternating point-impressions, which may also be used on the rims. Occasionally small bosses are placed at the inter-

section of the lines, or pairs of dimpled impressions are made with the fingers in the wet clay of the shoulder; these are called "eyes", and have an occult significance (pl. ix, 5).

Besides these domestic wares a wide range of ceremonial pottery is made, the most important being the Mondoro vases. They are intended to represent lions, and to contain the viscera of deceased chiefs from which the maggots (that later develop into lions) are said to arise. Nowadays they are made in many forms: birds, zebra, tortoise, and produced in large numbers in a village in the Wedza hills to the south of Marandellas (pl. ix, 11 and 12).

One of these vases, in the form of a male zebra was found by Mr. H. Posselt in 1900 in a cave near Fern Spruit, south-east of Fort Victoria, and is now in the National Museum, Bulawayo. The body is covered with transverse stripes incised before burning, and coloured alternately with a rusty red and burnished graphite. Many stories were current about this pot, amongst others that there was a female pot of the same kind in a neighbouring cave, but if so it was never found, and its true significance has never been disclosed (pl. ix, 10).

Another of these ceremonial vessels is the *pot of honour* made to represent a cock, the comb and wattles emphasising its masculine qualities. The head is coloured red and the neck polished with graphite, the remainder of the body being covered with bands of lozenges, chevrons and triangles; all in contrasted red and graphite. The pot is kept in a separate hut of its own, and is only brought out at the commencement of the feast held to commemorate a new accession to the chieftainship (pl. ix, 13).

The humbler walks of life also have their own appropriate vessels, for the bride has to present her husband with two large pots, about 9 or 10 inches (23-25 cm) over the rim, polished with graphite, and with five pairs of bosses, representing breasts, alternating with pairs of "eyes", round the shoulder. One of these is used as a food store, and the other for ablutions by the married couple.

Amongst the *Njanja*, a branch of the Zezuru living in the Charter District, the making of animal-shaped vessels has been carried to great lengths. Some are fashioned with two necks,

one at either end of the body, and are provided with stoppers of many fantastic shapes representing animals and human beings. These vessels seem to have lost much of their original significance, for they appear to be used frequently for ordinary domestic purposes. The Njanja also make a variety of other types of pottery, including globular pots with short, flared necks, finished in contrasting colours and decorated with a neatly incised double band of stippled triangles round the neck, very similar to examples from Mapungubwe. Some of these pots are provided with large loop-handles (pl. x, 7).

The origin of the Zezuru pottery is to be sought in the Class R<sub>2</sub> and Class R<sub>3</sub> wares, the form of the vessels deriving from the first, and their colour-treatment from the second. We have already met the breast-like pairs of bosses and the dimpled "eyes", but as yet have no clue to the antecedents of the animal-shaped vessels. On typological grounds some kinship might be suggested with the pottery birds of Basutoland, but these, so far as we know, have no ceremonial significance whatsoever.

*The Pottery of the Danda.*—The Danda (or Ndau, as they are also called) occupy the south-eastern part of the Colony and their territory extends along the Sabi River as far as the Indian Ocean. This has been their home for several centuries at least, for the 16th century Portuguese writers refer to it as the "kingdom of Sedanda", and relate that it was named after one of the Monomotapa's sons who rebelled against his father and succeeded in establishing his independence (1p. 34).

Neville Jones was greatly struck by the resemblance of the pottery made by these people to the ancient wares from the Limpopo. In his Report on Mapungubwe he stated:—

"A sidelight of importance in postulating the Shona affinities of the M<sub>1</sub> pottery (Class R<sub>2</sub>) is shed by an exhibit of pottery made by the Ndau group of the Shona people. . . . It is of fine texture and is ornamented with inverted triangles depending from a circumferential line, and hatched diagonally. In some instances the triangles are filled in with stippling. Both are characteristically M<sub>1</sub> patterns, and are so strikingly similar that the tribal connection is



unmistakable. They might, but for their obvious modernity, have come from Mapungubwe itself" (<sup>3</sup>p. 27).

Nothing is known of the pottery made by the Danda living in Portuguese Territory.

*Roswi Pottery from near Plumtree, Matabeleland.*—This pottery is representative of the greater part of Matabeleland at the present time. It is a polychrome ware, red, black, graphite and the various self-colours of the clay all being used in the usual bold chevrons, and other simple designs wherewith the surfaces of the pots are decorated. The coloured areas are usually separated by incised lines, but there are many exceptions, and incised bands of cross-hatching are run round the shoulders of the vessels (pl. x, 13).

Bowls, shouldered bowls, and the usual varieties of pots are all in use; but, so far as our information goes, nothing resembling the ceremonial pottery of the Zezuru is made at present.

The wide area over which this pottery, or its variations are made, reflect very clearly the extent of the dispersal of the Roswi by the Nguni incursions.

*The Pottery of the Venda.*—At the present time the Venda are divided into a Western Group, living in the south-western part of Southern Rhodesia, and an Eastern Group occupying the north-eastern corner of the Transvaal. The first has come under Sotho influence to such an extent that it has largely lost its cultural identity. It is probably for this reason that so little attention has been paid to these people, and we have only the vaguest information regarding the pottery they make. We can therefore only deal with the Eastern Venda, for it is from them that all our information has been derived.

According to their own traditions, the Eastern Venda migrated from the north to their present homeland between two and three hundred years ago. Here, due largely to the seclusion afforded by mountains and rivers, they have preserved

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<sup>3</sup> Fouché, L.: *Mapungubwe: Ancient Bantu Civilisation on the Limpopo*. Cambridge University Press, 1937.

their ancient customs with a greater degree of purity than has any other of the Bantu people of South Africa.

From the pottery found on their old sites, we know that it was at one time identical with our Class R<sub>3</sub> wares, and we may fairly consider it as representative of the bygone glories of the Mambo Period. Nor is the resemblance confined to the finer polychrome wares, for the brown earthenware domestic utensils are very similar to Caton-Thompson's Class C pottery, and are at present used over the whole of the Northern Transvaal.

Scattered amongst the Venda are small communities of Lemba. These people have no separate political organisation, and live on terms of easy symbiosis with their Venda overlords, for whom they work as craftsmen, receiving agricultural products in exchange for their work. In such circumstances it was only natural that Lemba women should be the potters. We shall nevertheless refer to the wares they make as being Venda pottery.

It will be seen that both the Venda and their Sotho neighbours decorate their wares with coloured surface finishes. It would be natural to assume that both had flowed from the same source. Although this may ultimately prove to have been the case, yet we believe that each has run in a widely divergent channel for so many generations that at present we may regard them as being quite distinct. In support of this conclusion we would instance the facts that the use of the comb (although typical of much Sotho pottery) is unknown amongst the Venda; while their practice of using a potsherd as a primitive turntable on which the pots are moulded is unknown amongst the Sotho.

Venda pottery is decorated with colour and with incised lines, generally in combination, the colours most frequently used being deep red, light red, black, buff, and graphite.

The usual domestic pottery is made with few variations. The large spherical brewing pots (also used for holding water and for storage) are made in a buff to brown ware with a matt surface, finished round the mouth with a bold roll, and with a band of herring-bone incisions about two inches (5 cm)

below the rim. Large gourd-shaped pots decorated with longitudinal stripes, alternately red and graphite, finished to a fine burnish, are also used for the storage and carrying of water (pl. x, 3). Bowls, often with a pedestal base, are used both as platters and as covers for storage pots (*ibid.*, 4). Cups with handles are used by the chiefs (*ibid.*, 6). The conical base of the one illustrated is hollow and burnished with graphite. Small hemispherical bowls, about six inches (15 cm) in diameter, with the whole of the inner surface deeply scored, are used as graters for snuff, a small dumb-bell-shaped pestle being used with them.

In addition to these ordinary vessels, there are others used for ceremonial purposes; such as the husband's washing bowl, that has a line or band of decoration just below the rim, both on the inside and on the outside (<sup>4</sup>p. 53) (as fig. iv, 4). Then there are large pots with multiple mouths or spouts used in the *thevhula* ceremony. These appear to be of two kinds. They may have several separate necks, usually four, but it is said that examples with a larger number are made. They are usually decorated with bands of triangles in contrasted colours, and are very similar to the four-necked pot of the Zulu (pl. xi, 10). The other kind have four small spouts or nozzles surrounding a central opening. The one illustrated (pl. x, 1), was obtained from Chief Ratshimpi Tshivhasa by Lestrade only after considerable difficulty, as such pots are regarded by their owners as being invested with a sacred significance.

Lestrade was informed that in olden times the Lemba made uncoloured pottery, decorated with lines in relief and nipple-like projections, usually four, placed close together and repeated in a group at intervals. Now this is very interesting, for the coloured pottery of the Venda goes back a long way, to the beginning of the 18th century at least; but as we have seen, the earlier pottery was uncoloured. We believe it would be beyond the power of tribal memory to recall the details of pottery over such a long period, and we suggest that we have another instance of the dualism we have noted so frequently in Bantu ceramics.

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<sup>4</sup> Stayt, H. A.: *The Bavenda*. London, 1931.

Lestrade discovered two examples of ancient "rain pots" in the possession of Mrs. E. D. Giesecke of Tshakoma. These are in a very coarse ware and each have a group of four bosses set close together on the side. They may well be representatives of the old Lemba wares, for they resemble no other known South African pottery (<sup>1</sup>p. 122). (See note pl. x, 11.)

*The Pottery of the Ungwe.*

The Ungwe of the Makoni District are descended from the Maungo, mentioned in Manoel Barretto's list of the subject kings of the Monomotapa's Empire; although it is probable that in his day they were living to the east of their present home. Their ordinary domestic pottery is very similar to that of the Manyica, for the surface of the pots is finished to a smooth black or polished with graphite and any kind of decoration is uncommon. The contour of the pots is quite different, for the concave neck and the everted lip are more generally used. In some of the larger vessels the junction of the neck with the body is marked by a slight but well defined ridge. A bowl with a pedestal base is also made, similar to the example from the Echo Farm site (pl. ix, 6), but with an everted lip and lacking the point-marked lines at the rim and foot. Pottery rings, about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches (12 cm) in diameter are made and used when carrying pots on the head.

It would appear that, in the burial of their chiefs, the Ungwe made use of similar ceremonies to those of the Zezuru, for Frobenius has illustrated (<sup>7</sup>p. 255, fig. 5), a canopic vase in red and black pottery, belonging to the same type as the one shown on plate x. It probably came from Muonve cave, the ancient mausoleum of the Makoni, as the paramount chiefs of the Ungwe are called.

3. *Miscellaneous Pottery Industries.*

The Manyica occupy parts of the districts of Inyanga and Umtali, while a large section of the people are settled across the border in Portuguese territory. Another section is settled in the Chilimanzi district, and yet another branch is to be found near Marandellas (<sup>1</sup>p. 13).

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<sup>7</sup> Frobenius, L.: *Erythräa*. Berlin, 1932.

The present home of the main body of the Manyica appears to have been known to the Portuguese in early times as "Maungo of which Macone is king" (<sup>5</sup>p. 355) and was stated to be a small kingdom "above Manica" (<sup>5</sup>p. 428), a term that aptly describes the relative positions of Umtali and Masikesi where Chikanga held his court. The name Chikanga is still honoured amongst the Manyica, and it is probable that the royal house and a large number of their people fled to the west of the escarpment when, as a result of his rebellion, the reigning Chikanga was killed by the Portuguese in 1632. Be that as it may, we can be certain that pottery in every way similar to the present-day wares has been made in the Manyica country for a very long time—from before the end of the Late Stone Age, in fact, for it has been found intercalated with Wilton material at a depth of 2 feet (60 cm) beneath the surface in Nyazongo Shelter near Penhalonga.

The domestic wares of a Manyica household include the usual utensils—the brewing pot, storage pots (pl. x, 19), a wide-mouthed pot for cooking porridge, one with a smaller mouth for the vegetables, and a little dish for serving relish. From these few types there seems to be little variation, although a chief may demonstrate his largesse by having a beer-pot with two mouths to serve his guests on special occasions (pl. x, 18), and in the past a wife would serve her husband with a sample of a new brew of beer in a flask-like pot that was used for no other purpose.<sup>6</sup>

When pottery is to be made the pot-earth is mixed with water and tempered by pounding, the only addition being powdered micaceous schist, used when a specular surface-finish is required. Small pots are raised from the lump, but the larger ones are commenced in a bowl or basket, the upper part

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<sup>5</sup> Theal, G. M.: *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, Vol. III. Clowes. London, 1899.

<sup>6</sup> Martin, C.: Manyica Pottery. *Trans.Rhod.Sci.Soc.*, XXXVIII, pp. 52-62, 1941.

[A charmingly written monograph describing pottery practices of the Manyica of the Umtali District. Well illustrated with a number of photographs, it might well serve as a model for future work in this field.]

being constructed first, then after it has dried it is reversed and the base is finished. In building up the pot-walls fresh material is added in coils or in pieces about twice the thickness and the length of the thumb, according to individual preference. The surface of the dried pot is rubbed smooth with a pebble, and the lip (and more rarely the whole surface of the pot) may be polished with graphite, or a red earth may be used as a colouring agent. The pottery is burnt on the surface of the ground, wood and grass being used as fuel.

Any form of incised decoration is very uncommon, but occasionally dimpled depressions or "eyes" may be made round the shoulder (pl. x, 17). One example has been recorded of a large shouldered pot with three bosses ranged round the upper part of the body.

There can be no question but that this pottery is directly related to the wares from the Pit Circles and Nyazongo Shelter, but its simplicity and lack of decorative embellishment make it impossible to connect it with our other wares with any certainty. It is not improbable however that it should be regarded as related to the undecorated pottery found with Class R<sub>3</sub> wares at Zimbabwe, and on the old Venda sites of the Northern Transvaal. The shape of the brewing pots resembles some of the largest pots from Bambandyanalo (pl. vii, 15), while the shouldered pots are reminiscent of those from Mapungubwe.

### *The Pottery of the Karanga.*

The name Karanga in various forms has been associated with the records of Southern Rhodesia since the 16th century, when, according to the Portuguese explorers, it was applied to the country and the people of the Monomotapa. Traditionally Karanga is derived from *mukaranga*, meaning a junior wife. Since the Empire of the Monomotapa was organised on a family basis, we may infer that Mokoranga was the special domain of one of his younger consorts. However that may be, the people who now bear the name are so widely scattered that they appear to be mere peripheral survivals from a more prosperous past (1p. 137).

The Karanga in the Victoria District (which includes Zimbabwe) make a black ware with a matt surface. Some of the pots have a short, tapered neck, and round its injunction with the body, a band of neatly made cross-hatching and pendant triangles are slightly raised above the general surface (pl. x, 10).

In the Bulawayo District, the Karanga make a very different kind of pottery. The general colour of the ware is a light red; the larger pots have a slight shoulder and a flattened base, the smaller pots are globular and, when decorated, have a band of pendant triangles painted in red, just below the rim (pl. x, 9).

From this it would appear that while the Karanga from the Victoria District have retained something of the Class R<sub>2</sub> tradition, those living near Bulawayo have been so influenced by their Sotho neighbours, that they have adopted the flattened base and painted decoration from them.

### III.

## RECENT PRIMITIVE POTTERY OF THE NGUNI AND SOTHO PEOPLES.

### *Introduction.*

The Bantu peoples of the Union of South Africa (with the exception of the Venda) may be included in two great groups:

1. The Nguni group, comprising the people who use the Nguni language cluster, and
2. The Sotho group, comprising the people who use the Sotho language cluster, and any others who have come directly under their influence.

Amongst all these peoples the fundamental resemblances in the making and use of pottery are very great; although, as we shall see, many local variations in types of vessels and style of decoration exist. For example, in Sekhukhuneland, the coil method of construction appears to be adopted throughout. Elsewhere its use is optional or is reserved for larger types of vessels, while the smaller ones are raised from the lump. The practice of building up the vessels on a mat or skin is doubtless connected with the prevalence of the flattened base; and it was probably the difficulty of constructing their large U-shaped brewing pots in this way that led the Tswana potters to build them up from the rim.

The assemblage of household pottery in common use amongst these peoples is much the same as described for those living further north. We shall therefore confine ourselves to dealing with exceptions to the general rule, rather than with the recapitulation of practices discussed before.

### THE NGUNI GROUP.

The Nguni Group may be subdivided into the Zulu, Mpondo, Thembu, Xhosa, and Swazi sub-groups; all of these with one exception (that of the Xhosa) have more or less distinctive pottery traditions of their own.



*Xhosa Pottery.*

Nothing is known regarding Xhosa pottery. They do not make it at present, and if they made it in the past, it was so long ago that all memory of it has faded out. This curious fact may be connected with their position in the forefront of the Bantu advance. They were therefore in continual contact with the Hottentots over a long period. One result of this contact was the absorption of a section of the Hottentot people into the Xhosa tribal community. Even when this did not happen we can be certain that these Nguni took Hottentot wives, with the result that any pottery they may have had was of a Hottentot facies, but the rapid extinction or complete absorption of the subject race, and the early penetration of European trade goods put an end to the making of native pottery.

*Thembu Pottery.*

We know very little about the pottery made by the Thembu, except that the rims are decorated with notches, after the manner of Class NC<sub>2</sub> wares. Otherwise it is very similar to the Mpondo pottery (<sup>1</sup>p. 259).

*Zulu Pottery.*

The political ascendancy of the Zulu people has resulted in their pottery traditions being imposed over a wide area of Natal, where the other Bantu tribes have abandoned their ancestral customs, and to a very large extent adopted those of their powerful neighbour. Thus it has happened that Zulu pottery is easily acquired and is well represented in our museums. It is still made in large quantities, more particularly since the disappearance of the petrol tin from their domestic economy has given a new impetus to the making of pottery. There is nothing out of the ordinary run of Bantu practice in the making of Zulu pottery. Pot-making is not undertaken during the winter months as it is thought that the cold dry winds are likely to crack the pots before they are burnt. After the pots have been burnt, they are treated with

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<sup>1</sup> Schofield, J. F.: A Preliminary Study of the Pottery of the Bantu Tribes of the Union of South Africa. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXXIX, pp. 256-281. 1943.

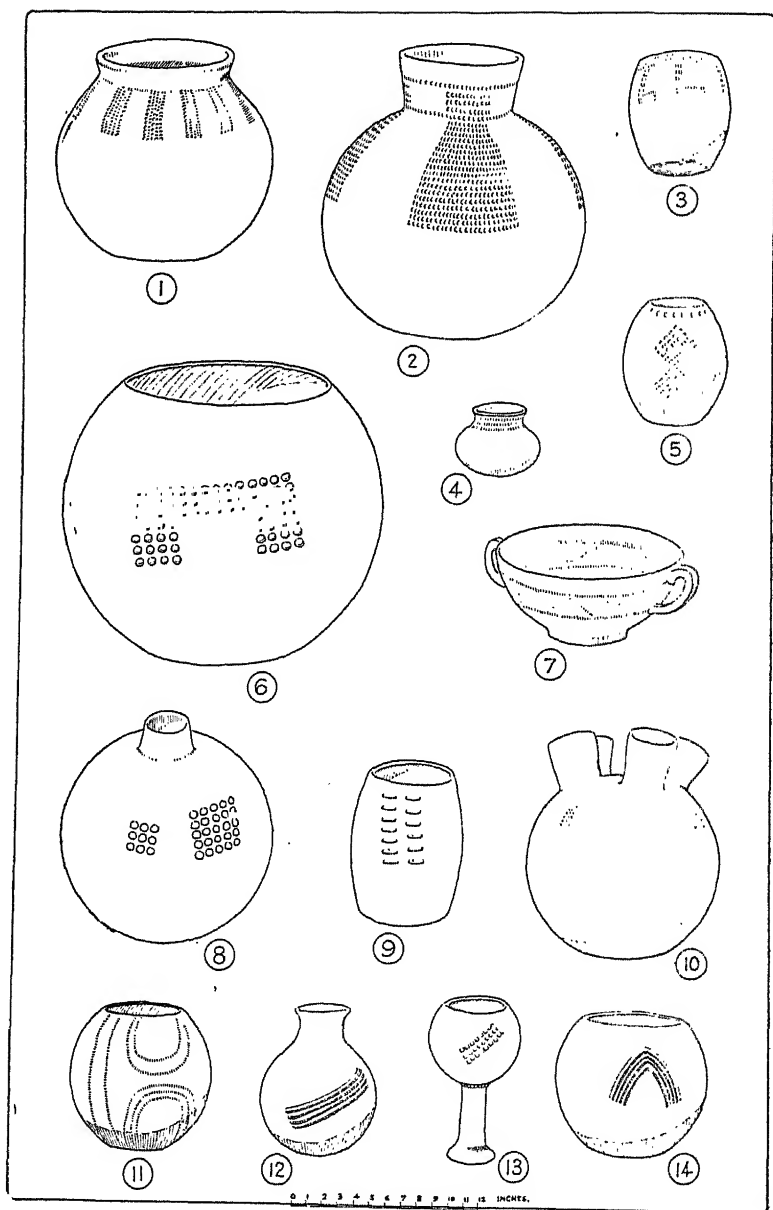


PLATE XI.

## PLATE XI.

## NGUNI POTTERY.

Drawn by Mr. G. W. Hockey.

1. "inKongo". Decorated with oat-shaped impressions. (See pl. viii, 4.) Finished to a red matt surface with the decorated areas blackened. From Pondoland. ELM
  2. "inKongo". Decorated with finger-nail impressions. (See pl. viii, 5.) Otherwise as last.
  3. "inQay". In a coarse ware with a brown matt surface, decorated with finger-nail impressions. From Pondoland. SAM.
  4. Small pot with a fine bronze burnish, decorated with crescentic impressions. From near Table Mountain. Pietermaritzburg. Lala pottery. NGM.
  5. "uKhamba". In a rough black ware with deep rounded impressions filled in with white pigment. Otherwise as last.
  6. "imBiza". Finished with a black burnish and decorated with pellets. Probably from Cetewayo's Kraal. DM.
  7. A bowl in Karridene ware. Decorated with roulette or stylus impressions and finished with a brown burnish.
  8. "uPhiso". As No. 6.
  9. "uKhamba". Decorated with horizontal wales. Otherwise as last.
  10. "uPhiso", with four necks. Between the necks there is a band formed with three lines of white cane glass beads, about 3mm. in diameter. A band of point impressions runs at right angles to it. Otherwise as last.
  11. "iKhanzi". Finished with a black matt surface and decorated with short stitch-like impressions. From Zululand. NGM.
  12. "uPhiso". Finished with a fine black burnish and decorated with parallel triangular wales. From Zululand. NGM.
  13. A goblet. Finished to a fine black burnish and decorated with three oblique lines of nail-heads. From Zululand. MM.
  14. "iKhanzi". As No. 12.
- NOTE.—All the above pottery has flattened bases.

a compound made by mixing the pounded leaves of the *uVemvane* plant (*Sida rhombifolia*) with sifted soot. This is rubbed into the surface and produces a fine black polish.

As a result of the primitive methods of manufacture and firing, Zulu pottery is easily broken. Repairs are therefore frequent and are effected by drilling opposing holes on either side of the fracture, then tying the holes together by passing vegetable fibre through them. The repair is made waterproof by a dressing of moist clay, renewed as often as may be necessary.

Zulu pottery is usually decorated with groups of pellets arranged in rectangles, lines or crescents, said to represent flowers (pl. xi, 6 and 8). The present practice is to roll small balls of clay and press them into position on the wall of the pot while it is green. In earlier times the pellets were provided with little stalks. These were taken right through the pot wall and burred over on the inside. Another method of decoration is by means of parallel or crescentic wales of clay raised above the general surface of the pot (pl. xi, 9, 12 and 14). These latter have suggested the eyebrows of a crude face to our potters, and with this many of the pots made for the curio trade are embellished. It is interesting to note that these decorative methods are all derived directly from the motifs used on the wooden meat dishes, milk pails, headrests, ladles and other objects carved exclusively by the men.

Pots are also decorated with loops and longitudinal lines, formed with stitch-like incisions (pl. xi, 11). Bands of chevrons are sometimes incised round the mouth of the pot, or a belt of large chevrons may be run round its middle. Very occasionally roughly engraved designs may be made on a pot after it has been burnt.

The brewing pots are spherical and about two feet (60 cm) in diameter (pl. xi, 6). Pots for carrying water or beer are from eight to twelve inches (20-30 cm) in diameter, with a short, vertical neck (pl. xi, 8). The drinking vessel is usually barrel-shaped, about seven inches (18 cm) in height and six inches (15 cm) over the rim (pl. xi, 9). Food is cooked in wide-mouthed spherical vessels (pl. xi, 11 and 14) and served in bowls with flared sides.

Besides these common types there are also other vessels, probably used for special occasions, such as the pot (pl. xi, 10) with four necks in the Durban Museum, and the goblet with a tall pedestal in the museum at the Mariannhill Monastery (pl. xi, 13).

The adoption by the Zulu women of the wood-carved motifs of their menfolk, and the use of them in the decoration of their pottery, is a matter deserving of some comment, for it is without a parallel in South African primitive ceramics.

It is generally recognised that amongst the Southern Bantu the social pattern represents a blending of a herding economy with one based on agriculture—the men deal exclusively with the cattle and everything appertaining to them, and in true nomadic fashion make all the wooden utensils required by the home, while the women (in accordance with their status of agriculturalists) provide the pottery. It may be, therefore, that we have, in this application to one medium of decorative motifs more suitable to another, a vestige of a migration of the ancestors of the Zulu that was sufficiently protracted to foster a recrudescence of latent nomadic habits, and the temporary abandonment of the making of pottery. When this was resumed along with more settled living conditions, it appears to have been permanently influenced by the wood carving technique that, during a period of nomadism, would tend to supplant the making of more fragile vessels (<sup>2</sup>pp. 256-58).

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<sup>2</sup> Hunter, M.: *Reaction to Conquest*. Oxford University Press. Milford. London, 1936.

[Dr. Hunter gives an excellent account of pottery making amongst the Mpondo, p. 100 of her book.]

Laidler, P. W.: The Bantu Potting Industry and its Impacts on other Native Potting Industries in South Africa. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXIX, pp. 778-791, 1932.

[This monograph reflects the information available on the subject at the time of its publication, but has to a large extent been rendered obsolete by subsequent investigations.]

Wells, L. H.: Ceramics in South Africa. *Ana.Facul.Cie.Porto.*, XX, pp. 1-48, 1935.

[Dr. Wells made an able attempt to systematise and clarify Laidler's work on South African ceramics, to correlate it with Caton-Thompson's classification of the ancient wares of Southern Rhodesia, and also with the whole field of African ceramics. Subsequent research has modified many of Dr. Wells' conclusions.]

*Lala Pottery.*

The Lala people, who still exist in scattered communities, appear to have preserved something of their old traditions, judging from examples of their pottery collected many years ago in the neighbourhood of Table Mountain (about 13 miles (21 km) to the south-east of Pietermaritzburg), and now in the Natal Government Museum. As might be anticipated, the ware is very similar to Zulu pottery, but the decoration consists of impressions made either with a gouge or the fingernail, and arranged in lines and rectangles. In the finer vessels these were filled in with a white pigment contrasting with the black surface-finish of the pot.

The types represented include the drinking pot, the spherical pot, and little pots with concave necks and a burnished bronze-coloured surface-finish. These last are of special interest, for if we are correct in attributing the highly decorated Class NC<sub>3</sub> pottery to the ancestors of these people, then these little pots may reproduce their ancient wares on a small scale (pl. xi, 4 and 5).

The use of white pigment may be an example of European influence, but on the other hand a similar practice has been recorded at Bambata Cave and other sites of unquestioned antiquity, as well as in recent Basuto wares (1p. 258).

*Another Pottery Tradition.*

On an open coastal dune site at Karridene, about 30 miles (48 km) south of Durban, considerable quantities of pottery, quite different from any described above, have been found. This ware is a blackish clay with a brown burnished or matt surface. Representative fragments of goblets and bowls have been taken. One of the latter had a foot (as distinct from a flattened base), and another had a rippled rim and handles. A number of these handles were recovered. From these it was seen that they had been attached to vessels by taking them right through the pot wall and burring them on the inside. Another fragment had a boss that had been pierced with a small hole. A number of the shards had been decorated with point-marks and lines of fine cuneiform impressions made either with a stylus or a roulette. This pottery is precisely

similar to a modern local ware (pl. xi, 7), but we should not therefore dismiss it as being unworthy of our notice, for a pipe-bowl, similarly decorated, was taken at the Dune Site, Durban North. As it showed every mark of a considerable age, and as these pipes are no longer made in the district, it is probable that this pottery tradition is indigenous and is not a recent importation (<sup>1</sup>p. 260).

*Mpondo Pottery.*

Pottery making in Pondoland appears to be dying out owing to the competition of cheap European products, which the more affluent Mpondo are able to purchase to a larger extent than the Zulu.

Their wares are very similar to those of the Zulu, but the finish is rather coarser and a brown burnish is often seen. The decoration takes the form of patches of crescentic impressions (frequently made with the fingernails) disposed in L-shaped masses, loops or truncated triangles round the shoulder of the pot (pl. xi, 1, 2 and 3).

The types of vessels they make includes the U-shaped brewing pot, measuring three feet (90 cm) in diameter by four feet (1.2 m) in depth, barrel-shaped drinking vessels, spherical pots with short flared necks, and wide-mouthed bowls with slightly everted rims. These spherical pots are very similar, both in their general form and the use of fingernail impressions in the decoration, to the Class NC<sub>2</sub>D pots, with short flared necks (<sup>2</sup>p. 100).

*Swazi Pottery.*

In Swaziland the potters' art is on the decline and is not carried to the same standard that we find in Zululand, with the result that few well-made pots are to be seen, and none have a capacity of more than a gallon (4.56 litres). Bowls, dishes and spherical pots (the latter very occasionally with a short vertical neck) are all made, but beyond smoothing the surface of the pots and more rarely burnishing them, no attempt at decoration is ever made (<sup>1</sup>p. 159).

*The Sotho Group.*

The Sotho Group may be subdivided into three sub-groups, namely those of the Basuto, the Tswana, and the Pedi.

The first of these includes the pottery traditions practised in Basutoland and those adjacent areas under its cultural influence. The second includes the pottery of the Tswana tribes living in the Bechuanalands, and in the Transvaal to the westward of the meridian of Pretoria. The third includes the pottery of the remainder of the Sotho people, of whom the Pedi are the principal representatives; with them we have associated the Tonga, and Ndebele tribes under their influence. It is by no means suggested that these sub-groups are mutually exclusive, but rather that many of the tendencies they have in common are more highly developed in one than amongst the others.

Owing to well-known historical causes all three sub-groups have many cultural affinities; these, however, are so confused that no adequate account of them has ever been attempted. In these circumstances our description of their pottery traditions must of necessity take the form of a recitation of isolated facts that we trust may be of some use to those who follow us in this line of research.

Of these three sub-groups, Pedi pottery is unquestionably derived from the ancient wares of the Bechuanalands, through the intermediary of the ancestral Hurutshe and the Tswana potteries. The antecedents of the Basuto pottery is not so clear, although there can be no doubt as to its relationship with the other two.

#### *Basuto Pottery.*

Basuto pottery includes a greater diversity of form and coloured surface decoration than is to be found amongst any of the other pottery traditions of the Southern Bantu, not excepting those of the Zezuru of Southern Rhodesia. This great variety and the facility with which even foreign wares are imitated indicate that we are dealing with the work of potters whose unusual initiative and fertility of invention could hardly be bound by the restraints of tribal customs. We must expect that in the past as in the present rapid changes in both design and decoration have taken place. It is therefore impossible at the present time to link Basuto pottery with any ancient tradition more definitely than we have suggested above.



Generally the clay used in this pottery seems to be more carefully selected than is the case with the Nguni, and on the whole it is of a much finer quality and finish.

The pottery is decorated by three principal methods. It is hardly necessary to remark that all three methods may be employed in the decoration of the same vessel.

1. A number of coloured *surface finishes* are employed: dark red, light red, brown, yellow, black, deep purple (probably made with ox blood) and blue. The last is a modern innovation. The brindled surface flared with black is so often seen that it is probably produced intentionally by a judicious management of the burning. In addition to the coloured decoration, the better-class vessels always have a fine glossy burnish.

2. *Engraved* pottery is seldom found, and such examples as exist may be copied from the decorated gourds and ostrich-eggshell water carriers. *Incised* patterns are generally used in conjunction with comb or bangle *impressions* to form a band round the belly of the pot or a line of chevrons round its neck. The impressions thus made are sometimes filled in with a white or black pigment.

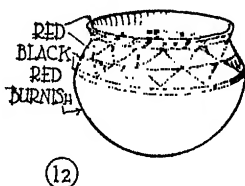
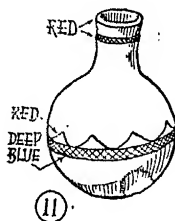
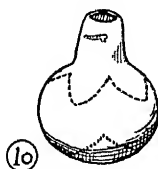
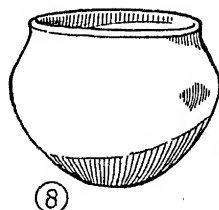
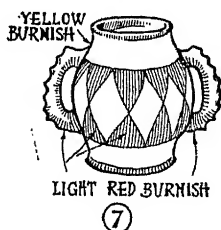
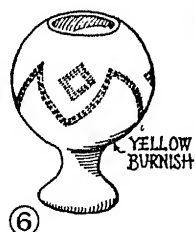
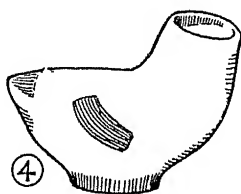
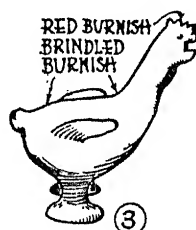
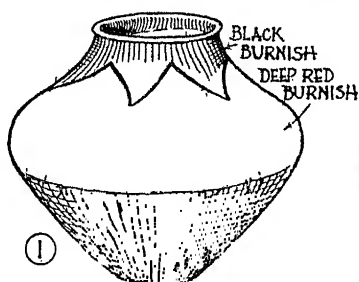
3. *Modelling*. The outstanding examples of this form of decoration are the bird-shaped vessels, which will be dealt with later. In a lesser degree modelling enters into the design of many of the pots, more particularly when projecting bosses or fancifully-shaped handles are used, as with the cups and belled beakers.

The principal types of pottery in use are as follows:

The U-shaped brewing pots are often of large size; one in the Natal Government Museum measures 23 inches (58 cm) in diameter and 30 inches (76 cm) in height (see fig. vii). The edge of the rim is scalloped, and just below it there is a wide thong of raw hide, cut from the skin in a circle and shrunk on to the rim as a reinforcement. The rims of these pots are usually finished with some sort of notching, a feature that links these wares with those of Class ST<sub>2</sub>. Similar but smaller bowls and also wide-mouthed shouldered bowls are used for cooking.

## BASUTO POTTERY.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
INCHES



## PLATE XII.

## BASUTO POTTERY.

*Drawn by Mr. G. W. Hockey.*

1. "Nkxo". Finished with a deep red burnish with black triangles below the rim. From Maseru, Basutoland. NGM.
2. Bird-shaped pot. See p. 89, "Au Sud de l'Afrique", by F. Christol. Paris, 1900.
3. Bird-shaped pot, with a red and brindled burnished surface. From Basutoland. MMK.
4. Bird-shaped pot, with a brindled burnished surface. From Basutoland. DM.
5. Goblet in a black burnished ware. From Basutoland. TM.
6. Goblet with a yellow burnish, the comb impressions of the decoration were filled in with white pigment. MM.
7. Double handled cup. In burnished polychrome ware. From Basutoland. MMK.
8. "Letsxana". In a burnished brindled buff ware. From Basutoland. NGM.
9. Carinated cup. The ridge of the carination was notched with a file. From Basutoland. NGM.
10. "Nkxo". In a burnished ware with a brindled burnish. The decoration was filled in with white pigment. MM.
11. Flask. In a burnished polychrome ware, decorated with engraving. Repaired with gift bol. From Basutoland. MMK.
12. "Letsxana". In a burnished ware with contrasted colours. From Basutoland. TM.

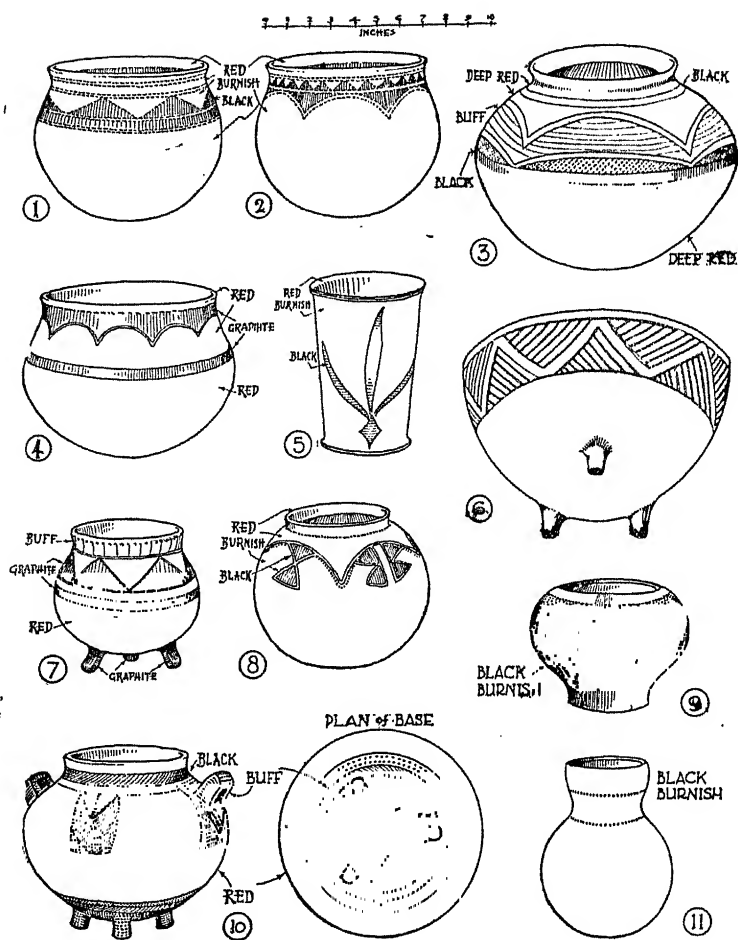


PLATE XIII.

## PLATE XIII.

## RECENT POTTERY FROM THE TRANSVAAL.

Drawn by Mr. G. W. Hockey.

1. "Pitsa", with a flattened base, in a red burnished ware, with a band in contrasted colours; the lines were made with a comb. Pedi, from the Pretoria District.
2. Similar to the last, but with an arcaded band.
3. Pot with a short flared neck, finished in contrasting colours. Huruthse. NMB.
4. "Pitsa", an example of "Swazi" pottery from Sekbukhuneland.
5. Tumbler, burnished with contrasted colours. Pedi, from the Lydenburg district. NMB.
6. The washing bowl of Chief Mapiela of the Langa Clan of the Northern Ndebele. In a burnished amber coloured ware, the decoration was filled in with white pigment. From Mankopani Location, Potgietersrust. TM.
7. A small three-legged pot, in a burnished polychrome ware. Pedi, from Sekbukhuneland.
8. "Pitsa", in a burnished polychrome ware with an elaborate arcade motif. Pedi, from the Lydenburg District. NMB.
9. Small pot, in a black burnished ware. Northern Ndebele, Maghombani Clan, from Vaaltein Location, Potgietersrust. TM.
10. Three-legged pot with loop handles, in a polychrome ware. Northern Ndebele, Moletiani Clan, from Zebediela Location. TM.
11. As No. 9 above.

The pots used for carrying water or beer have a biconical contour, derived originally from the method of making the upper and lower parts separately, and then welding them together along the medial line which has a distinct ridge (pl. xii, 1).

Flasks and gourd-shaped vessels have a wide distribution; the example of the latter we have illustrated is finished with a brindled burnish (*ibid.*, 10 and 11). The circular impressions forming the chevrons are filled in with white pigment. The flask is an example of decoration with an engraved line on the burnt pot.

The goblets (*ibid.*, 6) have shorter pedestals than those of the Zulu. It is stated that they are used only by the boys. Somewhat similar vessels are made from wood by the Ovambo.

Cups are made in a large variety of design and much care is lavished on their decoration. One of those illustrated has a carinated profile, and the ridge has been decorated with short vertical notches made with a file after the pot had been burnt (*ibid.*, 9). The bellied beakers are small handleless cups and have a well-marked protruding profile.

The bird-shaped vessels are often made for the curio trade, but the custom seems to be an ancient one, judging by the degree of stylism some of them show. A smaller, but similar, example to (pl. xii, 4) is in the Natal Museum, and has a lid in the form of a fowl's head, which in contrast to the body of the pot is rendered in a completely naturalistic manner.

For repairing the breakages in their pots, both the Basuto and the Tswana use a gummy substance they obtain from the "gifbol" (*Buphane disticha*). When it has set, the gum is black and very hard, and appears to be quite waterproof. The flask mentioned above has been repaired in this way (pp. 262-64).

#### *Tswana Pottery.*

Tswana pottery is very similar to that of the Basuto, but moulded decoration is not nearly so common, and the bodies of their pots often have a spheroidal, lenticular or carinated contour, and a short flared neck, cut square at the lip and decorated along the edge. The incised and impressed decora-

tion is sometimes very elaborate and approximates to the arcade motif of the Pedi. More generally it takes the form of a band of bold chevrons round the neck or belly of the pot (<sup>1</sup>pp. 264-66) (fig. vii and pl. xiii, 3).

### *Pedi Pottery.*

The predominant position that the Pedi have achieved has resulted in their pottery traditions being imposed on the Sotho tribes of the eastern half of the Transvaal; nor is their influence confined to these alone, for all the Bantu people with whom they have been associated show traces of the contact in varying degrees.

Typical Pedi pottery is decorated with a "comb" made from a piece of gourd-rind with a notched edge. With this tool the familiar "arcades" are easily made on the shoulders of the pots. The prototype of this motif is to be found in the heavy chevrons wherewith the polycrome pottery of Class ST<sub>1</sub> wares was decorated. Almost equally common are the pots decorated round the shoulder with a wide band of lines and complimentary triangles in contrasted colours (usually a deep red and a greenish black), very similar to the ancient wares of the Hurutshe (pl. xiii, 1).

The Pedi have nothing like the variety of vessels made by either the Basuto or the Tswana, nor does their pottery follow the same patterns. The brewing pots are shouldered instead of U-shaped, and they make platters, three-legged pots and tumbler-shaped drinking vessels. These last may owe something of their design to European influence, but as both types are known from archacological sites, it is evident that they have the sanction of their antiquity for their use (*ibid.*, 5).

### *The Pottery of Sekhukhuneland.*

In Sekhukhuneland the pottery industry is in the hands of Swazi immigrants who came into the country about the year 1874. Their finer wares have entirely supplanted the heavier yellow pottery formerly made. Thus these people have assumed a similar role to that of the Lemba in Vendaland.

This "Swazi" pottery, as it is called locally, usually has a line of deep incisions below the lip, sometimes running down the neck as well. The typical arcade motif of the ruling caste

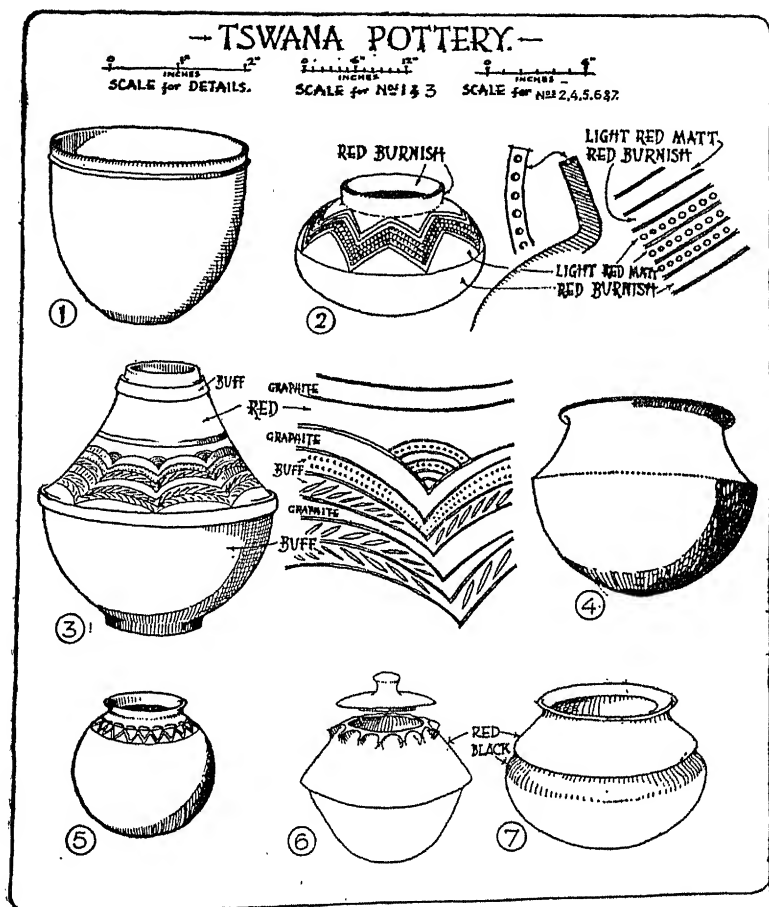


Figure vii

## TSWANA POTTERY.

Drawn by Mr. G. W. Hockey.

1. A beer pot with a flat base, 18 inches (45.5 cm.) over the rim. In a coarse red ware. The rim was rounded and slightly everted and decorated with vertical notches; below it a riempie band had been shrunk on. From Mochudi. MMK.

2. A spheroidal pot with a short flared neck. In a decorated red ware with a burnished surface. MMK.

3. A large carinated pot, in a decorated polychrome ware. Modern Huruthse. NMB.

4. A carinated pot with a flattened base, in a dark brindled ware. Southern Tswana. MMK.

5. A spherical pot with a flattened base and a short flared neck, finished with a brindled burnish. From Molepolole. MMK.

6. A lenticular pot with a flattened base, in a burnished red ware brindled with black. Tlokwa pottery from Gaberones. CU.

7. A lenticular pot with a flattened base, everted lip and a recessed band round the middle. In a red and black burnished ware. Kglata pottery from Mochudi. CU. (See also pl. xiii, 3.)



has been adopted as well as their use of contrasted colours, but all the pots have rounded instead of flattened bases. This pottery has no relation at all with the Swazi pottery already described under the Nguni group (*ibid.*, 4 and 7).

*Ndebele Pottery.*

The Northern Ndebele living in the Potgietersrust district have been virtually absorbed in the surrounding Pedi; but vessels in the Transvaal Museum indicate that at one time they practised a distinctive pottery tradition of their own. The most important of these is represented by the washing-bowl of Chief Mapiela of the Langa clan, who died in 1825. It is a three-legged bowl, about a foot (30 cm) in diameter, finished with a dark brown burnish and with a bold chevron band incised below the rim (*ibid.*, 6). The Moletani clan appear to have made a red burnished ware, with bands and rectangular patches of incised decoration coloured buff (*ibid.*, 10). The pottery of the Maghombani clan was black, burnished and decorated with point or stylus impressions (*ibid.*, 9 and 11). It must be emphasised that these surviving examples were probably all made for special purposes and therefore do not represent the habitual pottery practices of these people.

## IV.

### OTHER POTTERY INDUSTRIES.

#### 1. *Southwest Africa.*

Up to the present no illustrated account of the pottery industries of any of the peoples of Southwest Africa has been published; so, in the absence of authoritative information we can only attempt the correlation of such facts as we possess with the examples of pottery from this region preserved in our museums.

We have already quoted all that is known regarding the pottery of the Herero and the Dama (p. 65). Laidler states that the Masarwa Bushmen of Lake Ngami make pots measuring from 9 to 14 inches (23-36 cm) in height, with more or less pointed bodies (<sup>1</sup>p. 144). We know something regarding the Mpukushu and have rather fuller knowledge of the practices of the Ovambo tribes, it is therefore with these two last-mentioned peoples that we must concern ourselves.

#### *The Pottery of the Mpukushu.*

From the little we know of the dwellers in the Okavango swamps, they appear to make two distinct kinds of pottery. The one includes large vessels in a dark brown or black ware, some of these have a globular body with a flared neck and are richly decorated with a band of bold diagonal cross-hatching below the rim and a neck-band consisting of parallel incisions with diagonal cuts in the spaces between them—giving a cord-like effect. This neck-band is divided into sections with vertical spacing motifs at equal intervals (pl. xiv, 10). Another type of this pottery is a wide-mouthed bowl with a broad belt

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<sup>1</sup> Laidler, P. W.: South African Native Ceramics: their Characteristics and Classification. *Trans.Roy.Soc.S.Afr.*, XXVI, pp. 93-172, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> Delachaux, T.: Ethnographie de la Région du Cunène. *Bul.Soc. Neuchâteloise Geog.* Tome XLIV, vol. II, 1936.

of decoration below the rim. This belt is divided into sections, each containing a different motif of herringbone bands, hatching or triangles, incised on the wet clay.

The other kind of pottery includes globular pots and sub-spherical bowls, both with short flared necks. The clay was burnt to a red surface. The interior surface of the rims was painted with a deep red pigment that was also used to paint irregular undulating bands round the bodies of the pots (*ibid.*, 11).

Neither in its design nor in its fabric does this ware resemble the painted pottery from Parma and the Orange River Sites (p. 130). The form of these pots seems to have been derived from the shapes used by the Tswana for their pottery (fig. vii, 5), and the undulating painted bands may represent the bands of complementary triangles in contrasting colours used so frequently by the Sotho in the decoration of their wares (pl. xii, 12).

The Mpukushu appear to be one of the few Bantu people who have retained the dual pottery tradition we have so often noticed when dealing with ancient wares.

#### *The Pottery of the Ovambo.*

According to Vedder the Ovambo are divided into seven tribes, and although each tribe has not a pottery tradition of its own, we have ample evidence that there is a good deal of diversity between them. From examples we have examined these traditions fall into three groups: that of the Onkolonkathi on the one hand, and that of the Kwankwa and the Kualuthi on the other, with the Kwanyama occupying an intermediate position between them.

It is related of these people (more definitely of the Kwanyama) that the women have little underground workshops wherein they practise their art, constructed outside the village precincts and surrounded by a hedge of aloes. The pottery is made on a potsherd that can be rotated in a manner similar to that used by the Venda. After the pottery has been dried it is placed in a hollow in the ground filled with glowing wood-embers, more hot coals are put over it, and it is finally covered with earth. Thus we have a closer approach to the

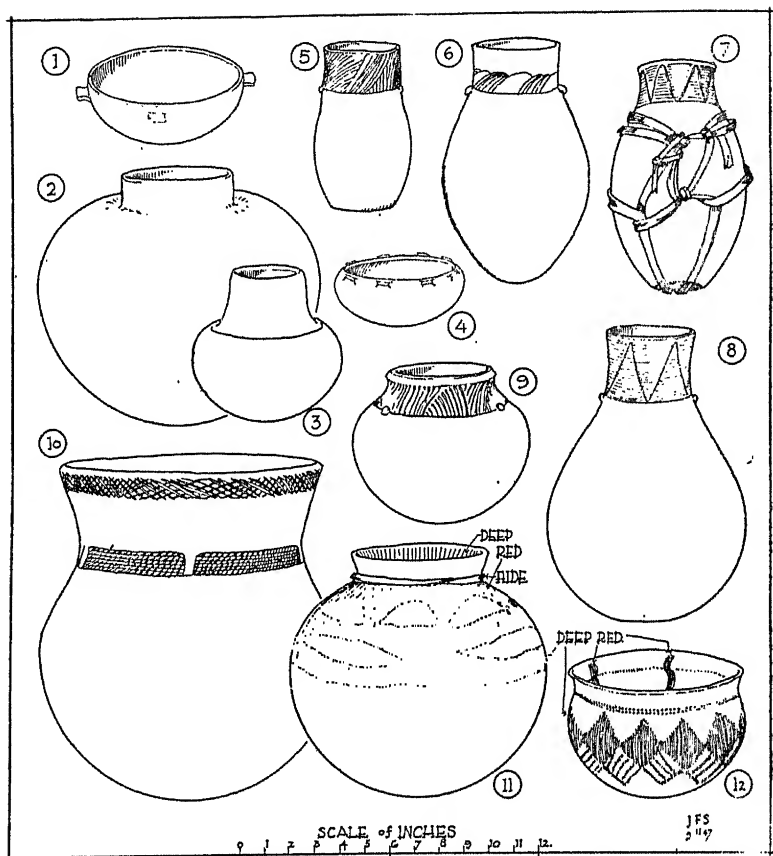


PLATE XIV.

## RECENT POTTERY FROM SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.

1. Bowl with four small handles, in a coarse ware, buff internally and brindled outside. Used for serving guests. Kwanyama. TM.
2. Pot with a short neck in a greyish buff ware with a matt surface. Kwanyama. SAM.
3. Gourd-shaped pot. As last.
4. Bowl with eight small lugs, in a black to buff smooth ware. Kwanyama. TM.
5. Flask with a flat base and two small bosses, in a brown ware with a matt surface. Kwankwa. SAM.
6. Flask. As last. Kualuthi. SAM.
7. Flask, with a flat base. In a buff ware with a smooth surface and a raffia carrying sling. Kualuthi. SAM.
8. Flask with a flattened base and two small bosses. In a reddish buff ware with a burnished surface. Kualuthi. SAM.
9. Shouldered pot, with three small bosses and a grey matt surface. Onkolonkathi. SAM.
10. Globular pot with a flared neck. In a coarse brown ware with a smooth surface. From Otjituo, near Grootfontein. Mpukushu. SAM.
11. Globular pot with a short flared neck, in a red ware with painted decoration. There is a hide thong round the neck. Mpukushu. SAM.
12. Shouldered bowl in a light buff ware with painted decoration. From Walvis Bay. SAM.

pottery kiln than has been described amongst any other Bantu people.

So far as we know, the Onkolonkathi make small globular pots with a tidily moulded lip, and in some examples a slight shoulder or a short neck. A neatly incised band of counter-hatching may surround the mouth of a vessel and three single (or sometimes double) bosses may be placed below the band. The pottery is very like some of the Class R<sub>2</sub> wares in form, decoration and the use of bosses (pl. xiv, 9). This resemblance is also reflected in other articles of the material culture of these people.

The Kwanyama seem to favour a gourd shape for their vessels, and the resemblance is increased by the brown or buff, matt or burnished surface with which the pots are finished, both finishes being sometimes used on the same pot. Special dishes with two or four small projecting handles are made and used for serving meat to guests (*ibid.*, 1, 2, 3 and 4). They also make pottery spoons and stemmed tobacco pipes.<sup>2</sup> The pottery made by the Kwankwa and the Kualuthi is very similar, and so far as we know, consists mainly of flask-shaped vessels with rounded or flattened bases. The surface usually has a brown matt finish, and the neck is decorated with some simple arrangement of lightly incised lines. Two small bosses are often placed just below this decoration, on opposite sides of the pot. Fragments of this ware have been found amongst the surface debris of Touppe Kopje in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (*ibid.*, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

On the whole, this pottery in its general shape (with the exception of the flat or rounded base), its neck ornamentation and the use of decorative bosses on the shoulders of the pots, resembles some of the Hottentot wares more closely than does that of any other South African people.

#### *Pottery from Walvis Bay.*

In the South African Museum there are specimens of bowls in a painted pottery that were collected about seventy years ago at Walvis Bay (pl. xiv, 12). The clay is of a light buff colour and round the neck of the one illustrated is a double

line of small triangular point impressions. The designs (including a cross on the interior of the vessel) were made with deep red pigment and with greater regularity than those of the other painted wares.

Raffia or fibre carrying-slings are often used with these pots. It is interesting to find motifs, based on such slings, used in the decoration of the pottery made by the Ila (Mashukulumbwe) of Northern Rhodesia.

## 2. *The Recent Primitive Pottery of Portuguese East Africa.*

Our knowledge of the recent primitive pottery of the Portuguese Territories is, with one exception, limited to a few casual remarks gleaned from various sources. These may be summarised.

We may reasonably suppose that the pottery of the Barwe Province is similar to that made by the Tonga in the northern part of the Inyanga District of Southern Rhodesia. We also know that the pottery of the Manyika living in the Portuguese Territory is similar to that of their relatives across the border, but it is frequently decorated with contrasted colours. Miss Earthy has put it on record that the Chopi and the Langa decorate their pottery with motifs derived from the patterns they use in tattooing their bodies, but unfortunately neither the forms of these motifs nor those of the vessels have been described.<sup>3</sup>

With the Ronga, living in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, we are in a better position, for Henri Junod has given us an excellent account of their practices. Thanks to the presence of good pot-earth in their locality these people have become justly famous over a wide area for their pottery. Not that there are any restrictions regarding its manufacture (in which any woman may engage), but in practice the less skilful, and those living at a distance from a good clay, prefer to purchase their requirements rather than to attempt to make pottery for themselves.

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<sup>3</sup> Earthy, E. D.: On the significance of the body markings of some Natives of Portuguese East Africa. *S.Afr.Journ.Sci.*, XXI, pp. 573-578, 1924.

The only materials added to the natural clay are water, sand and pounded potsherds; with these it is kneaded into a plastic lump and from this the pot is moulded, more clay being added as occasion requires. The green pots are dried for a couple of days in the shade, and any desired ornamentation is added, usually in the form of triangles or other simple motifs. The firing takes place in a depression in the ground, wood or palm-pith being used as fuel. When cold the pots are stained a fine brown with a decoction of mangrove bark and a creeper called *mahlehlwa*.

The usual retinue of domestic wares is represented: large shouldered pots with vertical lips are used for brewing beer, smaller but similar pots for serving beer and carrying water, and still smaller ones are used as cups. Wide-mouthed bowls with a carinated profile and an everted lip are used for cooking vegetables and porridge, and shallow bowls for serving food. Short cutty-pipes on the European model are also made (<sup>4</sup>vol. II, pp. 112-116 and 389).

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<sup>4</sup>Junod, H. A.: *The Life of a South African Tribe*. Macmillan & Co. London, 1927.

## SUMMARY

The origins of pottery are linked with those of agriculture, and, since agriculture arose in several foci during the course of the Neolithic Revolution, it is suggested that similar circumstances operated in the evolution of pottery; but it is recognised that this theory has never been demonstrated and its acceptance must await further research. It is however recognised that people who depend on different sources for their food supply generally use different types of pottery.

The primitive pottery of South Africa is classified primarily under five heads: (i) Pottery from Later Stone Age sites; (ii) Bushman pottery; (iii) Hottentot pottery; (iv) Pottery from Iron Age sites; (v) Recent pottery.

(i) Pottery from Later Stone Age sites. This is discussed as being from (a) open sites, (b) decorated caves and (c) undecorated caves. It is shown that the wares from these sites have their own peculiarities, but wherever sufficient evidence is available, it indicates that the pottery cannot be associated with the lithic industry with which it occurs. The presence of comminuted pottery fragments is correlated with the deposits in the painted caves, while the larger sherds from the unpainted caves indicate that the caves were used for domestic purposes.

(ii) Bushman pottery. The sole diagnostic feature of Bushman pottery is the pounded grass that was sometimes mixed with the clay. Otherwise the pottery of their Hottentot or Bantu neighbours was used or imitated.

(iii) The nomadic Hottentots, whom the early explorers from Europe found in possession of the Cape, were the owners of an ancient breed of cattle, known to us from Egyptian monuments, and now called the Africaner or lateral-horned zebu. They also owned sheep and made pottery. Much of this pottery is thin and well burned and is distinguished from all other South African wares by the frequency of the use of a pointed base and of perforated lugs. It demonstrates general uniformity of type with great diversity of detail.



(iv) The Iron Age pottery has been classified on broad territorial lines—Rhodesia, Bechuanaland, Transvaal and Natal.

(v) Contemporary pottery has been designated by the tribal name of the people who made it.

From all this welter of material, certain trends can be distinguished. Hottentot pottery must be considered as being distinct from Bantu wares, although it may ultimately be shown to have had a common origin in the distant past.

The earliest Iron Age pottery (that of the proto-Sotho peoples of Southern Rhodesia), called R<sub>1</sub>, has in its typical forms a carinated profile and was frequently decorated with impressions made with a comb—features still found in the wares of their descendants. The carinated profile is also a characteristic of the Tonga tribes of the Zambesi Valley and the Ronga of Portuguese East Africa. This indicates that the feature has a remarkable antiquity and must have originated before their separation, and perhaps while their tribal ancestors and those of the Sotho were still one people. Both the Tonga, the Ronga and the proto-Sotho pottery have rounded bases, but in modern practice the Sotho have generally adopted the flattened base.

It would seem that the ancestors of the Nguni tribes at one time abandoned the making of pottery. Among the Xhosa the art has never been resumed. Their neighbours (the Thembu and Mpondo) borrowed their methods of decoration from a Sotho people, the Fokeng, and amongst the Zulu the women adopted the wood-carved motifs of their menfolk in the decoration of their pottery. Nguni potters also favour a flattened base for their wares.

The Society wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the letter from the Secretary of Education dated 2nd June, 1948, promising the sum of £150 as that Department's contribution towards the cost of publication of this work. Our thanks are also due to the Director of the Durban Museum and Art Gallery for his help in approaching the Department of Education on behalf of Mr. Schofield.

TABLE SHOWING THE PROVENANCE OF CLASS R<sub>1</sub> POTTERY.

Site.	Associated Material.				Remarks.
	Stone Implements.	Pottery.	Beads.	Metal.	
Bambata Cave.	Wilton	Bambata type and similar to Toupye material.	—	—	Intrusive ware. From a depth of 4 ft. 6 in.
Dhlo-Dhlo.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> .	—	—	One piece only. (6) p. 174. From stone filling below paving.
Echo Farm, Salisbury.	—	Class R <sub>1</sub> G.	—	Iron.	Grave deposits.
Gokomere.	Wilton.	Class R <sub>1</sub> G.	19th Century.	Iron and Copper.	Wilton assn. only on Site "WxN." R <sub>1</sub> G pottery, metal and beads only in upper layers.
Golden Shower Workings, Acturus	—	—	—	—	Pottery figurines and mbusa.
G. Ichahwe.	—	—	—	—	From artificial in-filling of "ancient" workings.
Happy Rest School	—	—	—	—	From surface. (23) p. 123.
Lee E. Richardt.	—	—	—	—	Similar to Class R <sub>1</sub> G.
Leopard's Kop, Kichim.	—	—	19th century.	—	Similar to Class R <sub>1</sub> G.
Mission Claims, W. H. Nicholson.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> and R <sub>3</sub> .	Pottery, stone, ivory and 2nd Series glass.	Gold, iron and copper.	From information given by Mr. K. R. Robinson From a midden associated with a gold working site.
Madiliyanga.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> .	—	—	From surface.
Maonza Cave.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> .	—	—	M.S.A. implements at a slightly lower level.
Mapungubwe.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> NT <sub>1</sub> and several other types.	Pottery, gold, 1st and 2nd Series glass and "Garden rollers."	Spindle whorls and mbusa.	Intrusive ware, 2 pieces from 1st foot of deposits, 2 from 4th, 4 from 5th, 1 from 6th, and 2 from 7th.
Mount Alice.	—	Class R <sub>2</sub> .	Pottery and "Garden rollers."	—	Pottery figurines and mbusa.
Old Umtali.	—	—	—	—	From information given by Mr. H. Tatham.
Outspan, Sinola.	—	—	19th century	—	Similar to Class R <sub>1</sub> G.
Parma Kopje.	—	Class BP <sub>1</sub> .	—	—	From information given by Mr. K. R. Robinson.
Que-Que.	—	Class R <sub>1</sub> 1.	—	—	From below "cement" floor. Rock Shelter No. 1. Intrusive ware.
Salisbury Commongage.	Wilton.	—	—	—	From surface.
Toupye.	—	Class BP <sub>1</sub> , BP <sub>2</sub> , BP <sub>3</sub> and BP <sub>4</sub> .	"Garden roller."	Iron.	One piece at depth of 3 ft.
Zimbabwe.	—	Class R <sub>1</sub> .	1st and 2nd Series.	Iron.	Intrusive ware. Associated with earlier occupation.

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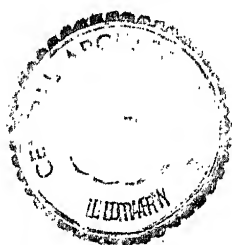
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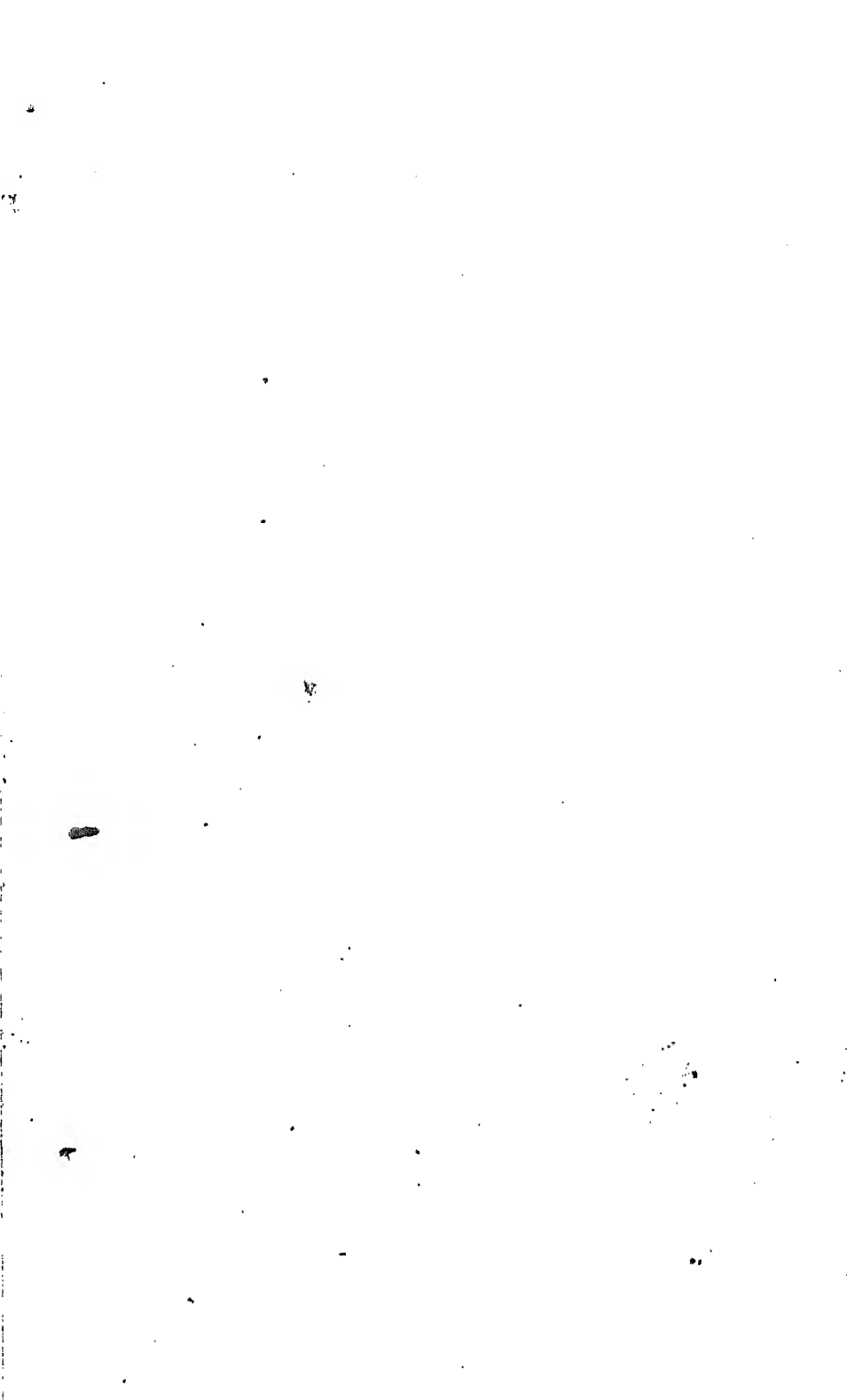
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